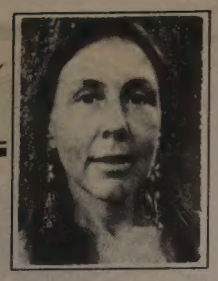
Scrapbook

G

Advocate 9-25-91

walkabout

By
Deidre Consolati



AMONG THESE HILLS IN LEE: People who emigrated from other countries and chose to settle in Berkshire County and the town of Lee sometimes did so out of expediency or chance. But often the choice had to do with the region's physical similarity with the old country -- combined, of course, with the opportunity for work.

It was no accident that in the last half of the 19th century Italian laborers began to straggle in as marble and lime businesses were beginning to boom. Lee and West Stockbridge and Canaan, Conn., with their abundant lodes of stone and nearby clear, spring-fed lakes and temperate climate, closely resembled the lake region in northern Italy where the soft, mild summers celebrated in many an Italian fresco found their match in the equally benign Berkshire summers.

"Tommy" Kelly, 68, of Laurel Street in Lee, was only 22 when he arrived in town and like other immigrants before him was drawn by the chance for work. Sixteen days after his arrival found him with a job at the local paper mill (now Kimberly-Clark) where he worked for 39 years, retiring only recently.

"The rugged west coast of Ireland where I'm from resembles the Berkshires more than anywhere else in the country," he says, "and the hills there are lush, because they're watered all the while with the rain."

In earlier years, immigrants found other similarities in Lee's terrain to their native soil. Scott's Pond was the former name of Laurel Lake, so-called for its resemblance to the *lochs* beautifully commemorated in poetry and stories by Sir Walter Scott. A German relative of the Schuck family who formerly resided on East Center Street often spoke of the stands of pine trees in the Berkshires as strongly reminiscent of the coniferous Black Forest near her birthplace in northern Bavaria.

Anyone who grew up among the low, rolling hills of the Berkshires and traveled beyond them to a rugged mountain range such as the American Rockies or European Alps returned with the very clear distinction between the geographical definition of "hill" and "mountain," and the realization that the Berkshires belong in the former category -- even though some of them are called mountains. The T-shirt in local clothing stores certainly applies here: *BERKSHIRES (BURK'SHIRS), pl. n. Glacial hills of Massachusetts where images and songs of the human soul blend in extraordinary harmony with the vibrance of nature and inspiration of heritage..* As a hitchhiker from Colorado, now in his third year of residency in the Berkshires, remarked, "I just think of them as miniature Rockies."

To people who live in the Berkshires, it becomes second nature to travel up and down the hills without a second thought in the course of a day. Contrast this, say, with the town of Amherst less than 60 miles away in the Connecticut valley, where the terrain is noticeably flat and the daily experience is one of remaining at the same altitude. Noted a Main Street dweller in Lee, "Come to think of it, we go up and down hills constantly. There's Laurel Hill and Golden Hill and Prospect Hill and Dublin Hill. There's Fairview Hill and Fairmount Hill and Ferncliff Hill, not to mention Jacob's Ladder and all the hills leading to Beartown, October and Washington mountains. Why, even Main Street is downhill."

According to local history, the town of Lee had its origins in the hills. Although there were a few settlements along the Housatonic River in the early 1700s, those who arrived in greater numbers chose to begin their new life higher up in the hills in order to escape not only confrontation with the indigenous Mahicans but the "miasmas" of the river valley: the fogs and mists that, according to folk tradition, caused serious illnesses. Their settlement in the hills east of present-day Lee became known as Dodgetown and prospered around the mid-18th century. It wasn't until other settlers (deciding to take their chances close to the river) built the area's first church in 1780 and what is now Lee solidified as a town and Dodgetown was abandoned.

Levi Beebe of Beartown Mountain in the late 19th century studied the wind currents rushing around and past the hills surrounding his lofty home and translated those eddies into weather predictions. Other observers of the Berkshires see the hills as mirrors that play back the constantly shifting forces of local weather. On a sunny day, a bright azure sky turns the hills a corresponding blue; when the sky clouds over to a gunmetal color, so too do the hills change to gray.

It is this experience that elevates us -- revealing like a human face the inner landscapes of the heart -- as we carry out our lives in the presence of their enduring magic.

Breast cancer campaign

Sallie Kate Kish of the breast cancer support group, Y-Me of the Berkshires, is asking everyone who has had breast cancer or known someone with the disease to take part in a national letter-writing campaign to lobby for more research and treatment funds.

The campaign requests participants to write three personal letters about the effect breast cancer has had on their lives. Each letter should be placed in a separate envelope with the name of President George Bush on one, Senators John Kerry and Edward Kennedy on another and Rep. John Olver on the third.

All these envelopes should be placed in one envelope and addressed to: Breast Cancer Letters, c/o Massachusetts Nurses Association, 340 Turnpike St., Canton, Mass. 02021. These will be forwarded to the officials during October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. For more information, call Kish at (413) 243-4822.

Advocate 9-25-91

Eagle 7-26-91

Open house set at Lee Town Hall

LEE — The Selectmen have scheduled an open house at newly renovated Memorial Town Hall, the 117-year-old town office building on Main Street, for Saturday from 10 to noon.

The Lee High School band will play, and Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, who once had his district office in the building, will say a few words. The Rev. Denis B. Ford, rector of St. George's Episcopal Church, will give an invocation.

Refreshments will be served.

The two-story building, erected in 1874 as a memorial to Lee veterans of the Civil War, was renovated during the past year under a $657,000 contract. An elevator was installed, and the building was made accessible for physically handicapped people. New offices were created on the first and second floors, and basement space was partitioned to provide for a new lockup, a storage room, a locker and dressing room for policemen and quarters for the town switchboard.

Although the old Lee District Court has been folded into the Southern Berkshire District Court in Great Barrington, the former's courtroom remains in Town Hall and has just been refurbished by painters as a meeting room.

The general contractor for the job, completed so that town offices could move back into the building in July, was Souliere & Zepka of Adams.

Trucking company's manager attempts to appease abutters

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 9/26/91

LEE — The general manager of the Connecticut-based Vallerie Transportation Service came to Lee on Monday to try to smooth relations with the Selectmen and others over complaints of undue nighttime noise at the company's freight terminal on Marble Street.

What he got for a while was an earful of invective from the terminal's neighbors and a terse comment from the town building inspector, Robert W. Lester, that he should attend a District Court hearing next week that affects the terminal building.

At the end, Steven Mathews, who lives in Norwalk, Conn., told the Selectmen and abutters that he and the terminal's manager, Michael Maher, would do whatever they could to bring harmony to the neighborhood.

Maher said yesterday that the Monday night discussion ended with the understanding that the abutters "are going to be contacting us if there are any problems."

"We don't anticipate any," he added.

Number provided

Mathews handed out his business cards to abutters and others who asked for them. He also told several he would give them his home telephone number.

One of the Marble Street terminal's neighbors, Rose Salice, said it was the home number she wanted "so when that starter goes off at 2 a.m. and wakes me up I can get you out of bed."

She spoke of an air starter, a device used to crank over diesel engines to get them running. Another neighbor, Stephen B. Seward, said air starters sound like jet engines.

Mathews, who said he first became aware of the current complaints after reading an article about them in The Eagle in July, said his company has moved trailers to the adjacent Lee Lime Corp. yard for nighttime transfers in order to avoid disturbing the neighbors. He thanked the lime company's president, Martin H. Deely, for allowing the transfers.

Deely is also a member of the Board of Selectmen.

"We're dropping and hooking up trailers at Lee Lime between 9 at night and 6 in the morning," Mathews said.

"We've sent a letter to terminal managers and drivers about what we'd like them to do," he said, to avoid nighttime disturbances from such things as idling trucks, using air starters, and parking and hooking up trailers.

But abutters weren't entirely mollified. They referred to a written agreement, drafted in September 1989, in which Vallerie said it would avoid parking trailers and performing related work at the terminal between 9 p.m. and 6:30 a.m. "wherever possible." At first, there was strict observance of the agreement, they said, but then there began to be violations.

Mathews said the operative phrase was "wherever possible," and Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa said a reading of the agreement made this clear.

Nevertheless, one abutter contended that Vallerie "is operating out of an illegal terminal. There was never a building permit."

Occupancy permit

But Building Inspector Lester said this was wrong. There was a building permit, he said. What is lacking is a permanent certificate of occupancy.

This does not affect Vallerie directly, although it may do so indirectly.

Vallerie leases the terminal from its owner, Frederick B. Mercer of Stockbridge, who has a temporary certificate of occupancy. Lester, who in July contended Mercer had failed to bring the property up to standards he had agreed to, filed an application with the Southern Berkshire District Court in Great Barrington for a complaint against him. If issued, it will charge Mercer with failing to obtain the occupancy certificate.

A hearing on the application is scheduled for Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. in Great Barrington. Vallerie has been notified of the hearing but is not required to attend, Maher said.

In the Monday discussion, Selectman Deely sought to begin a peace process by arguing that the path to coexistence lay through voluntary efforts by the trucking company and its abutters to bury the hatchet.

"If you could talk to your neighbors rather than the Board of Selectmen," he said to Mathews, "you would have a better chance of resolving your differences, and you'd meet some nice people besides.

"In the long run, this will be the only way."

Mathews appeared to agree. "We want to be a good neighbor," he said. "We are trying. We really are."

Genial Genies Offer Workshop in Lee

LEE—The Genial Genies, a group of genealogists from Wilbraham, will be at the Lee Library from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 4.

Under the direction of Mrs. Gordon McKay, the genealogists will teach and help beginners or those with problems.

The workshop is sponsored by the Berkshire County Daughters of the American Revolution. Record 9-27-91

Record
iday, September 27, 1991

Fire Marshal Says Yes and No to Propane

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—Agreeing at least that the state Fire Marshal was one of the hardest state officials to get hold of, selectmen were otherwise passive Monday as the six-month old propane storage controversy neared resolution.

A half a year after he said he would issue rulings, state fireman Joseph O'Keefe has notified town officials that Lee Oil Co. has a valid license for storage of propane at the company's terminal on Maple Street.

Meanwhile, he denied the company permission to store propane tanks on Ferncliff Avenue at headquarters.

According to O'Keefe, "Propane gas vapors are heavier than air and seek the lowest level possible and any release of propane at the Ferncliff Avenue locate would migrate toward Main Street," where sources of ignition would be hard to control.

The Ferncliff license, which had been granted by selectmen, was appealed by neighbors and abutters after Lee Fire Chief Ronald Driscoll ordered the area evacuated Sept. 11, 1990, because of a leaking propane tank truck.

Marshal O'Keefe held a public hearing in Lee last January on the appeal and promised a decision by March 1.

Hodgkins Still Doesn't Have to Pay Lee Rent

Record 9-27-91

LEE—It was *deja vu* all over again Monday as selectmen decided for the second time to give Lee's home-grown state Rep. Christopher Hodgkins free office space in the town-owned Airoldi Building on Railroad Street.

Try as they might, Selectman Joseph Dupont and former Selectman Joseph Castronova couldn't squeeze $122.50 a month out of Hodgkins for his district office space.

Selectmen Diane Roosa and Martin Deely thinks it's a good thing to have the local guy in town, "under our thumb," Deely said Sept. 9, the first time the issue came up for consideration.

But that time, according to an arcane point of order raised by Castronova, the motion to forego the rent charge for the state house-based Democrat failed to gain a second so it really wasn't a done deal.

Roosa and Deely voted against charging rent, reiterating their support of Hodgkins' local effort. Rent, were it to be billed, would be paid either by personal or campaign funds, Hodgkins said in a telephone interview.

He said he was grateful for the space and also noted that some of the very same complainers who want him to pay rent use his office to complain in.

Town-Manager Approach Wins Wide Approval

Record
9-27-91

By Thelma O'Brien

Pure, plain democracy is what it's all about as South County towns struggle with administrative growing pains.

Residents are watching the ballot shorten as more municipalities opt to appoint once duly-elected planning boards, town clerks, treasurers and assessors who now have to answer to someone else besides God and the voters.

Town halls are gaining the equivalent of the corner office, wherein a personage who can rally the troops, run the show and translate the ever expanding library of state and federal rules and regulation is installed and paid accordingly, minimum of about $40,000.

The town manager/administrator is taking over and even though boards of selectmen remain the sovereign rulers, a strong town professional can make it look otherwise. Harried selectmen, volunteers all, most with "real" jobs, are often only too grateful to listen to an expert and take his advice, even though they can give him the ax.

But not everyone is happy with this trend toward a central administration and a shorter ballot.

William Derrick, an 18 year member of the Lee Board of Assessors and its chairman for the next three years, has modified his anti-town manager stance but not his views on the short ballot. He says voting is in his bones and that's just the way it is.

"I was brought up to elect people," he says. "It rings true to me and it's part of my belief.

"I don't like my board being taken off the roles," he said, referring to an upcoming decision in Lee. "I honestly believe that voters should be able to decide. I like what just happened in Pittsfield."

(Voters Tuesday threw out two-term incumbent Mayor Anne Everest Wojtkowski and forced that city's first at-large city council primary election in 16 years.)

The outcome of Thursday's special town meeting in Lee to put the finishing shape on that town's new administrator form of government will reflect the trends in South County, where, in the last two years, at least three towns have changed their administrative charters and others are studying the possibilities.

Lee voters, who first approved the post of town administrator in the annual election last May, will be asked to modify the list of career qualifications required of a town administrator candidate - 10 years of municipal administrative experience for college degrees.

More significantly, citizens will decide if they want to remove from the election roles the assessors, the town clerk, treasurer, collector and board of health and make their offices appointed instead.

The first consideration, to the apparent irritation of several residents who small a rat, is reportedly to allow some current Lee municipal officers long on experience and short on degrees to qualify for the job.

If recent selectmen's meetings in Lee are any indication of what opposing sentiments engender, this special town meeting promises to be very special indeed.

And it is these provincial (in the best sense) sentiments that inspire opposition from the die-hards.

Edward Briggs, another Lee assessor and chairman of the the town Democratic Committee, says appointed town officials "politicize the process" too much. He sees such things as abatements, the province of the assessors, as suddenly being subject to scrutiny by selectmen and town managers and every Tom, Dick and Harry who works for the town, although he didn't exactly explain how that would happen.

He is happy being quoted calling the town administrator " the dictator," and he says that if all the workers listed gain appointed status, "There will be no one to vote for other than the selectmen.

The 7:30 p.m. Lee meeting, originally scheduled to refine and balance the town's $8.2 million budget, will be held in the auditorium of Lee Central School.

Marilyn Contreras, municipal policy analyst for the state Executive Office of Communities and Development, said the trend to centralize is pervasive.

"Basically, some of the reasons for change you hear most for the need for full-time management have to do with the financial conditions under which communities now operate. Proposition 2 1/2 changed these conditions, made it more complicated.

"Other reasons include the limited access to state grants, the dimmer financial picture, rising fixed costs such as insurance and the number and complexity of federal regulations."

Her analysis is echoed by others with the big picture.

Karl Hekler, director of the Berkshire County Regional Planning Commission, said, "In the 24 years I have been here, I have seen the enormous administrative demands being put on local government. State programs alone are terribly complicated.

"From my perspective and for regional planning, it is easier to work with full-time professional people, which is not to take away from elected boards, some of which are excellent."

The world's intrusion is what makes the need for professional management, according to David Steindler, a resident of Sheffield, a town of 2,910 which adopted a town administrator change two years ago.

Steindler, who was a prime mover in the Sheffield process, is flexible when it comes to the short ballot issue and tends to favor elected boards when making policy is the charge, nevertheless favors professional management.

"We cannot be 1970 anymore. The world will not leave us alone. We need full-time people. We can't do government out of somebody's living room anymore."

Great Barrington (see accompanying page 1 story) will begin shortly to examine town manager status for its 7,725 citizens. At a recent selectmen's meeting, a seven-member committee was appointed to consider a change administrative assistant status.

Great Barrington paid a hefty sum, $18,000, according to Selectman Edward Morehouse to a consultant in 1984 to study town administration and then left things pretty much as they were.

This time around the committee will consider, among other things, expanding the number of selectmen from three to five, a move adopted in a town to the north of Great Barrington.

The 5,069 residents of Lenox voted last year at annual town meeting to install a town manager at $50,000 in 1992 and to elect five selectmen over the three who now govern the town. Voters also changed the elected status of several town job, including collector, clerk and treasurer..

Stockbridge, according to one town worker who preferred anonymity, is governed by three selectmen and an executive secretary and plans to stay that way.

Any thoughts about changing to town administrator?

"None of that," he said.

The folks over in Egremont Town Hall for some reason never returned calls placed to inquire about the status of administration in that town of 1,229. Right now the town is run by three selectmen and their secretary.

Monterey"s 805 residents are staying put with three selectman and their secretary, according to Selectman William Bohn, who mentioned that every once in awhile someone brings up new administration ideas but they don't get very far.

West Stockbridge, population 1,483, interestingly, makes do with three selectmen and a circuit rider town administrator shared with Richmond..

The die has doubtless been cast for western Massachusetts municipalities and, while the change doesn't portend the end of one-man-one-vote backbone of New England town meeting government, that so-called purest form of democracy nay be the next tradition to be scrutinized for efficiency's sake.

Town Manager

Continued from A1

Lee delegates support appointive posts

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 9/27/91

LEE — On a voice vote, town meeting representatives last night returned the special act creating a selectmen-administrator form of government in Lee to the form in which it originated 2½ years ago, making the boards of assessors and health and the offices of town clerk, treasurer and collector appointive instead of elective.

The change will now have to be approved by the Legislature, but once done, the Selectmen will move to hire the town's first administrator as early as January, according to Selectman Martin H. Deely.

The vote on the change was a close one, but Moderator Joseph M. Toole had no trouble in deciding that the "ayes" were in the majority among the 37 representatives who were on hand for what turned out to be a two-hour special town meeting in the auditorium of Lee Central School.

Budget under cap

Through a sequence of 15 budget-adjusting articles on the warrant beforehand, the representatives also enacted a final town budget of $8.57 million that falls within the tax cap set by tax-limiting Proposition 2½.

The key vote in the sequence was one that will make use of $115,000 from free cash to bring the budget into balance and thereby avoid a tax-cap override.

The voters at the annual town election May 13 made it overwhelmingly clear they do not support an override, Finance Committee Chairman John E. DeVarennes observed.

Debate over the change in the elective posts in the selectmen-administrator legislation was the longest and most intense of the evening, with a few more representatives and spectators calling for its defeat than its passage. But endorsement of the change by Deely, who had advocated it as long ago as July when the town meeting was first taking shape, appeared to carry it over the top.

Saying it implied "no criticism of current officials and [contained] no hidden agenda," Deely urged adoption on grounds that a professional administrator, once on the job, should have a certain amount of control over the officers and boards whose functions — fiscal planning, communication, employee supervision, personnel development and setting of policy — would be his or her ultimate responsibility before the Board of Selectmen.

The Selectmen will attempt to hire an administrator early next year.

"I think we should make an honest effort to professionalize the management of the town," he said. "We don't want to do it by being divided into a number of isolated fiscal pockets."

When the town meeting first approved the selectmen-administrator form of government in 1989, it did so by reference to a report that contained the proposed legislation in detail. But before the Legislature finally passed the act and sent it to then-Gov. Michael S. Dukakis for signature last December, it had changed the clerk's, treasurer's and collector's posts and the boards of assessors and health to elective positions, as they have historically been.

Although the representatives last night approved the change back to the earlier form, they did not adopt all the changes that were before them.

One that they shot down would have allowed the Selectmen, when finally choosing an administrator, to waive the educational requirements — either bachelor's or master's degrees and five or three years' experience, respectively, in supervisory administration — and to rely instead on a minimum of 10 years' administrative experience in municipal government.

LEE, continued on B5

■ LEE, from B1

Deely said the intent of the change was "to encourage as many local people to apply for this job as would." He conceded it was a "tough call."

But among the comments was one from District 4 representative Aldo V. Pascucci to the effect that he had conversed with a number of voters, either in person or by telephone, and found that "they think it would be a disgrace to lower the educational standards for the administrator."

The representatives also approved asking the Legislature to affix an emergency preamble to the act when the change in the elective positions come before it in the next few weeks. This will permit it to become effective once it is enacted rather than 90 days thereafter.

Deely said at the outset of debate that whichever way the representatives voted, the Selectmen "will work out a job description and go out and try to hire someone after the first of the year."

Urging his colleagues to vote against the change, Edward M. Briggs, who is an assessor and chairman of the Democratic Town Committee, said that "shortening the ballot is the wrong thing to do" because it will shrink the number of town officials directly accountable to the voters.

The town of Adams, which has a selectmen-administrator form of government, continues to elect the officers that were at issue in Lee last night, he said, "and it's working perfectly."

The three elements of the article dealing with the special act were divided so they could be voted on separately. Visualizing a scenario that would cause recriminations later, District 4 representative Stephen Cozzaglio called for the division. "We don't want to throw the baby out with the wash," he said.

Budget balanced, free cash freed up during Lee meeting

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 9-28-91

LEE — In adopting a town spending plan at Thursday's special town meeting for the 1992 fiscal year, Lee town meeting representatives not only balanced the budget at $8.44 million, they voted to apply $115,000 in free cash toward the coming tax levy.

The result of the latter action will be to hold the tax rate close to last year's figure of $12 for each $1,000 of assessed valuation.

Otherwise, the rate would have climbed by nearly 35 cents, meaning that the owner of a house assessed at $120,000 would have paid an additional $42 while the owner of a $220,000 house would have paid an extra $77.

Now, those same owners would pay only a few dollars extra.

Town Treasurer Patricia Carlino said the result of the Thursday night town meeting was that Lee has an $8.44 million budget. A story in yesterday's Eagle reported the balanced-budget figure incorrectly.

$115,000 in free cash

Applying the $115,000 toward the tax levy was a proposal of Finance Committee Chairman John E. DeVarennes, who said the town's free cash has been certified by the state Department of Revenue at a little more than $406,000. There is enough, therefore, to use $115,000 of it in the manner voted, he said.

The intent, he said, is to avoid a sudden increase in the rate if the town this year finds it must purchase additional acreage next to the present town landfill. The annual town meeting in 1990 authorized up to $1.06 million for the acquisition.

Although one-third, or $354,000, is to be reimbursed by Mead Corp., which plans to use a proportionate amount of the land for its own landfill, the town would still have to make an initial payment on the indebtedness, he said.

Thirty-nine of the 58 district and at-large representatives were present for the meeting, a 67 percent turnout.

On two occasions they strayed from the script by:

► Turning down a proposal to cut $15,000 from the $4.307 million school budget, a cut that DeVarennes said could be made up at the end of the year but which School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said would put the School Department in a permanent hole.

► Voting against the proposal to allow the Selectmen to waive educational requirements for the town's first professional administrator, expected to be hired shortly after Jan. 1.

But they said "aye" to a sequence of other articles that, together, removed some $225,000 from the original, unbalanced version of the budget.

They also approved a number of related measures, including one that rescinds authorization to borrow $600,000, voted at the annual town meeting in May 1983, more than eight years ago.

DeVarennes and Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo said that at the time town officials were anticipating expanding the town landfill. But landfill regulations and rubbish-disposal costs have changed significantly in the meantime, Scolforo said, and $600,000 "would never be enough to do anything up there now."

Furthermore, DeVarennes said, rescinding the old vote lowers the indebtedness carried on the town's annual recapitulation sheet required by the Department of Revenue each year in certifying the tax rate.

The representatives also:

► Voted to petition the Legislature to repeal an act that several years ago created an insurance trust fund to offset sudden increases in insurance costs. There is some $214,000 in the fund now, said DeVarennes, and once the fund is liquidated, the money can be transferred to the general fund and then used to help reduce the tax rate next year.

► Voted to use $2,500 from the special South Lee Fire Station Land Settlement Account to pay for a new oil tank at the station. Previously, the money had been raised and appropriated from tax revenue, but because the special fund can only be used for the station itself, the Finance Committee recommended tapping it for the oil-tank outlay.

► Voted to rescind $33,900, also approved at the May 9 meeting, to repair the roof on the Hyde wing of the Central School.

Snapshots of damage

School officials had pinned colored snapshots of sections of the school exterior on a sandwich board inside the entrance to the Lee Central School gym, where the meeting was held. The prints showed chipped and peeling paint and some masonry cracks.

"I looked at the pictures on the way in, too," DeVarennes told the representatives, but he added that if the delegates wanted to balance the budget, they would have to resist voting against rescission.

At least one representative, Edward M. Briggs, called the rescission "penny wise and pound foolish."

Another, Laurence Whitman, called attention to an initiative in Pittsfield whereby funds donated by the Elfun Society and GE, coupled with a turnout of volunteers, resulted in the repair and repainting of city-owned Springside House in Pittsfield.

"Couldn't something like that be arranged through the school system?" he wanted to know. "I would be willing to spend my time on it."

Eagle 9-28-91

Lee to stop mailing annual town report

LEE — The soft life is over for town of Lee residents.

As a result of one of the votes at the special town meeting Thursday, the town bylaws have been changed in such a way that copies of the town's annual report hereafter will have to be picked up by residents at designated locations in town. One of the locations will be the town clerk's office.

No longer will they get their annual reports by mail or messenger. No more Mr. Nice Guy.

The altered bylaw, which says that seven days before the annual town meeting, the Selectmen "shall cause to be placed in three (3) convenient locations within the town copies of the annual town report to be picked up by residents desiring to do so."

The reason for this is economy. By halting mailing and delivery of the reports, the town is projected to save $3,000, half the original outlay that covered both printing and distribution.

Area Sports

Lee to host USTA teachers' workshop

Physical education teachers from four Southern Berkshire school districts will take part in a U.S. Tennis Association orientation session Wednesday from 1 to 4 p.m. at Lee High School.

USTA clinician Janice Reardon will conduct the sesson on the elements of group instruction, stroke production and sportsmanship. The school districts taking part comprise the towns of Lee, Otis, Tyringham, Lenox, Great Barrington, Stockbridge, Housatonic, Sheffield, Alford, Egremont, New Marlboro and Monterey. Observers from other schools are welcome and may obtain further information from Bunnie Lahey, Western Mass. representative to the New England Lawn Tennis Association, 243-3240, or from Lee High athletic director Dick Lenfest, 243-2781.

The USTA in-service workshop is a three-hour seminar designed to help physical education teachers in tennis instruction. Each participating school also receives enough tennis rackets to equip its largest classes.

The Western Mass. State Advisory Committee, the regional arm of the USTA, is organizing school and summer tennis programs throughout the area, providing free training sessions and equipment. The committee's next meeting is scheduled Nov. 13 at 6:30 p.m. at Brodie Mountain in New Ashford, and it's open to the public.

Lee baseball card club to meet

The Hot Corner Baseball Card Club sponsored by the Lee Youth Association will hold its monthly meeting Tuesday, Oct. 8 at 7 p.m. at Lee Community Center. It will feature a "buy, sell and trade" night, followed by a business meeting. For information about club membership, call the Youth Association (243-0717, Joe Furgal (243-3320) or Kevin Bartini (243-3646).

Eagle 9-29-91

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur G. Wolfe

A.G. Wolfes celebrate 50th

LEE — Mr. and Mrs. Arthur G. Wolfe of Marble Street celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary yesterday with a family party at the Cork & Hearth.

The couple have three daughters, Mrs. Jeanne Bartolotta of Pittsfield, Mrs. Patricia Goodfellow of Lee and Mrs. Eileen Czaja of Housatonic. They also have nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Mr. and Mrs. Wolfe were married Sept. 28, 1941, in St. John's Church, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mrs. Wolfe, the former Anna Marie Price of New York City, is retired from Tri-Town Paving. Mr. Wolfe, also a New York City native, is retired from John Hancock Insurance, Pittsfield.

Eagle Sunday, September 29, 1991

School choice gets off to a rocky start

By Bill Everhart
Berkshire Eagle Staff

All worry about the law's gaping loopholes.

PITTSFIELD

Much ado about nothing, or not enough ado about something, Massachusetts' controversial new school choice law is many things to many people. Berkshire County school superintendents, charged with administering the new law, don't agree on much, but most agree that, like it or not, the law is here to stay.

Under choice, a student can attend public school in another community and the state will deduct the tuition from state aid given to the student's hometown and send it to the community where he or she will attend classes. It has heavyweight proponents in Gov. William Weld and Senate President William Bulger.

Early in the school year, it appears the choice law has not had the same dramatic impact in Berkshire County, with the possible exception of the Sheffield-based Southern Berkshire Regional School District, as it has had in the eastern end of the state, where Brockton and Maynard have each lost more than 50 students and Milford is advertising in the newspaper for students. The decision of several county districts, including the highly regarded Mount Greylock Regional, not to participate in the program could account for this lesser impact.

"I would humbly say that our good reputation would make us appealing," said Mount Greylock Superintendent Howard Coulter. "But the method of funding seems unfair. It can really bring a school district to its knees."

"Mount Greylock has a great program, but for an Adams kid to go there he has to get around that damn mountain," observed Adams-Cheshire Superintendent Bernard Fallon. "There are geographic realities that work against choice in the Berkshires."

No positive effect seen

But if choice isn't disrupting school systems in Berkshire County, the law isn't having the positive effect it is supposed to have either. The theory is that students will move to better schools, forcing poorer schools to improve or be left by the wayside, but county students are generally moving for reasons other than education.

A couple of students left Southern Berkshire for the Berkshire Hills School District to play football. One student left his district to go to school with his girlfriend and many left to cut down on travel time between home and school. Others wanted a fresh start at a new school, and a few switched schools because of interest in extracurricular programs. But few, if any, students are moving because of academic dissatisfaction or a desire to move to a better school.

"I've talked to all of those kids, and not one said he or she was coming to Lee because our programs were better," said Lee Superintendent Henry Zukowski, whose system picked up 17 students through the choice law. Students are coming to Lee, he said, because parents are employed in town, the drive is shorter, or they want to participate in Lee's popular home-building program.

In fact, the choice law has arguably worked against educational progress in the South Berkshire district.

South Berkshire has lost 19 students to the choice program, four of whom chose not to participate in its innovative Odyssey program, in which students take three 90-minute classes that offer more time to pursue studies in depth, rather than the traditional shorter classes.

"The purpose of choice is to get school districts to change," said Southern District Superintendent Thomas Consolati. "Well, we changed and we lost four students. That is ironic."

Consolati is also frustrated because of the 19 students who "left" his district, nine apparently lived in the district but never attended school in it. Nonetheless, his district will lose $120,000 of its $400,000 in Chapter 70 state aid to pay for their tuition, though, as he points out, there has hardly been an "exodus" from his district.

North Adams Superintendent Robert Maroni reports the loss of two students to Lee under the choice law, one who attended McCann Vocational School and one who lived in Tyringham, moved to a North Adams foster home, and wants to stay in school in Lee. His district will lose about $9,000 in aid for two students who never attended school there.

"That shows you how unfair this law is," says Maroni.

The school choice law does give districts the option of not participating, and North County districts have been only lightly affected by the law because they don't participate. But districts aren't given the option of holding onto students who want to leave. The Berkshire Hills School District's decision to participate not only enabled it to accept students from South Berkshire, it persuaded Lenox to reluctantly accept choice students.

"I can't worry about what other districts are doing," said George Lane, whose Berkshire Hills district gained 31 students through the choice law. "If I do, I won't have a job much longer."

Lane, who describes himself as a strong proponent of choice, is confident legislation will eventually be enacted to take the financial sting out of the law.

CHOICE, continued on E2

Bill Everhart is a member of the editorial staff of The Eagle.

School choice off to a rocky start

"The school systems that have the money and don't keep their standards up deserve to lose," declared Lane. "If they can't maintain standards, they should have state aid."

Lane is certainly not the only choice advocate. Consolati, despite his concerns about gaps in the law, applauds it for allowing students to move elsewhere for a fresh start or remain in their school even though their family has moved away.

"I'd hate to see this choice law become the laughing stock of the nation, because we'd lose choice forever," said Consolati.

Consolati added that the debate has prompted his district and Berkshire Hills to begin discussing ways of integrating programs "rather than steal each other's Chapter 70 money."

"In the long run it will make for better quality education," says Pittsfield Superintendent Robert LaFrankie, who has lost about 15 students to choice. "Choice is democracy, and in an open marketplace you have to create a better product or you can't survive. Choice will force us to satisfy our clients, students and parents, better than we have in the past."

But all worry about the law's gaping loopholes. Schools are losing aid for students they never had. The law says money should be taken from Chapter 70 aid given to the towns, but in South Berkshire the vast majority of the aid goes to the regional districts. It is unclear where the money should come from.

* * * *

The law works to the advantage of students with their own transportation. In that vein, observed Coulter, "the wealthy and affluent who were sending their children to schools in other districts are now using public money to do what they were already doing."

Fallon, who believes school choice is a "smokescreen" to disguise the state's desire to improve public education without funding it, wonders if top football players, drama students or musicians will gravitate to schools with highly regarded programs in those areas, to the detriment of programs in other schools. Central Berkshire Regional Superintendent John Jangro is concerned that if "external" choice is allowed, students within his seven-town district will demand "internal" choice, perhaps disrupting the towns' arrangement for payment of capital costs based on percentage of students from each town.

"Becket entered into an agreement in good faith," said Jangro of a town in his district which is now sending several students to bordering Lee under school choice. "Contractually they are in violation because they have been forced into something they don't want to do."

State Senator Jane Swift, R-North Adams, acknowledges that legislation attempting to address the law's problems "keeps growing by the week" but she anticipates emergency aid for districts like Southern Berkshire. In the long term, she has co-sponsored legislation that will, among other provisions, require districts receiving choice students from border districts to pay their transportation costs.

In the meantime, Berkshire County school districts will adjust as well as possible.

"The law was a product of simplistic thinking and we essentially ended up with a pilot program," said Lenox superintendent Roland Miller. "The state should fund it until we learn the strengths and weaknesses and adjust the legislation."

"It's like special education. At first they threw a lot of rules at us but now I say 'Thank God for special education,'" said Zukowski. "I hope I can say the same someday for school choice."

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Kevin Connor of Lee, with $1,400 vacuum cleaner he signed on to sell, claims company didn't live up to pay guarantee.

Two jobless men assert vacuum promises empty

But company says it's on up and up

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

10-2-91

LEE — Two Lee men, out of work and looking for jobs, say they found work a week ago by answering an advertisement that they contend offered promises that were not fulfilled and money they never got.

A spokesman for the company that placed the ad said this was not so.

The ad, published on two occasions in The Eagle by Berkshire Distributing of Lanesboro, spoke of an appliance company that needed "full time help day and night."

It turned out that the job was to sell $1,400 vacuum cleaners, said Kevin Connor, 28, of Fairview Street. The part of the ad that caught his eye and that of another Lee resident, Stephen Tisdale, 20, of East Street, said "$397 per week guaranteed in writing."

"I asked them when I went there 'Where's the guarantee?' " Connor said. "They told me I had it, in the ad."

But with the promise of some training to sell vacuum cleaners and the $397 a week guaranteed, he said he figured he would stick it out. "Hey," he said, "there's no work around here and I have a mortgage payment coming up." He said he was told that payday was Saturday.

But when Saturday came, he contended, "there was no pay. I asked where the check was and they told me, 'You get paid on what you sell,' " in short, a commission. Tisdale said he had the same experience.

Furthermore, Connor continued, he began to feel that he and others who had answered the ad and were being "pumped up" to describe the vacuum cleaners to prospective customers in ways that overstated the cleaners' capabilities. "They showed us a lot of sales tricks," he said.

The price of one of the machines, about $1,430 when the tax is included, seemed excessive as well, he said, particularly when he saw a televised ad for a "top-of-the-line Hoover at Sears on sale for $159."

In any event, he maintained, when a paycheck

VACUUM, continued on B5

Lee men attack vacuum campaign

■ **VACUUM, from B1**

failed to materialize when he was told it would, he left. He said he later got into an argument on the matter with the Berkshire Distributing president, Robert J. Piccolo, who also lives in Lee, but without receiving the pay.

A secretary said Piccolo was not available yesterday, but one of the company's managers, John Walton of Pittsfield, said Connor's and Tisdale's contentions were inaccurate. They, as well as other prospective employees, were given a clear description of the training and sales program before the training began, Walton said.

"Basically, we hire on Mondays and Tuesdays," he said, "and start the training Wednesdays. We go over all the benefits on Wednesday before the training starts." If Connor and Tisdale had returned on Monday, he maintained, they would have received the written guarantee mentioned in the ad.

He said the company would not say the written guarantee was the ad itself.

What the company requires, he said, is that any salesman conduct 12 demonstrations in area homes during a week. "If they don't sell one, if they go O for 12, they are still guaranteed the $397. But we have a product that nationally sells 33 percent of the time," he continued, "and so if they do that, they sell four vacuums and they make more than $397. Most of our salesmen are doing that."

He said the company's product, called TriStar, is a "vacuum cleaning system" that has air-purifying and other capabilities not found on other vacuums. When told that at least one area appliance store was pricing its best vacuum, a Eureka, at $400, he said TriStars last considerably longer and have 25-year guarantees and other advantages that must be seen and demonstrated to be appreciated.

Berkshire Distributing, whose offices are at the Pontoosuc Mini-Mall, 543 South Main St. in Lanesboro, has been in existence two years, Walton said, and is successful. "The economy doesn't affect us," he said, referring to the depressed economy of the Berkshires and the high unemployment rate here. "As a matter of fact, August was our best month."

According to Connor and Tisdale, what Berkshire Distributing relies on is its sales trainees selling vacuum cleaners to family members and possibly friends. "You sell one of those and you make a big profit," said the former.

He said he compared one to his own 12-year-old vacuum cleaner and found no particular difference. "I'm not saying [TriStar] is a bad vac," he said. "It's probably as good as any other. But it's just a vacuum cleaner."

But aside from this, his and Tisdale's principal gripe is that they were not paid even for the training period, although law requires at least the payment of minimum wage during training.

Walton said all trainees were paid minimum wage according to the law.

Lee Residents Face Minimum $20 Monthly Trash Bills

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—December 1 may be the cutoff day for trash collection as Lee residents have known it for years.

From that day, if all goes according to plan, the town's domestic trash will be transported by commercial haulers to Pittsfield, where it will be incinerated by Vicon Recovery Associates.

Following the advice of J. Peter Scolfaro, superintendent of public works, selectmen agreed to contract this winter with Vicon, even though the state-ordered closing date for the town's landfill on Woodland Road is not until Dec. 31, 1993.

"We have to get into Vicon now," Scolfaro said. "They might not have any room later."

As soon as Lee receives approval from Pittsfield officials, who must approve such trash transportation agreements, Lee residents will be notified of the new system, which will involve commercial hauling from residential Lee to Vicon in Pittsfield. They will also be advised about local haulers and told that their minimum monthly costs will be no lower than $20, the approximate amount paid by Lenox residents for pickup of up to four bags of trash a week under an arrangement similar to the one proposed in Lee.

State environmental laws demand that all unlined landfills close up by the 1993 date. Building costs for a new Lee landfill that would meet environmental requirements have been estimated at between $10 and $20 million to open; public works and health officials in town have determined that the incineration route is the most economical.

Meanwhile, the Woodland Avenue site still needs some fill so during the spring some town trash will be used for that.

Lee Shortens Ballot and Budget

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—Sitting just behind the 39 attending representatives at last Thursday's town meeting was a scholarly older gentleman clutching a paperback called ""From Pythagoras to Einstein," (by Kurt Friedrichs), a title aptly descriptive of the deepening complexity of municipal government.

The 62 percent turnout of delegates voiced final approval of a modified selectmen-administrator form of government that will include appointing rather than electing the board of assessor, town clerk, treasurer and collector, and hiring a town administrator with some kind of college degree; and they balanced a budget of $8.44 million with an infusion of $115,000 of free cash.

Enough citizens and their representatives raised enough questions during the two-hour session to give voice to those whose relationship with town government grows distant and whose understanding of the budget process has practically disappeared.

The easier decisions came last and, while they inspired the most argument - mostly from residents who wanted to maintain the status quo - the issues were reasonably understandable.

Selectman Martin Deely, who spoke at least twice in somewhat pleading tones in favor of shortening the ballot, said, sort of enigmatically, that there "were no red sails in the sunset," with the proposal to switch certain jobs from elected to appointed status, that there was "no hidden agenda" in the proposal, "no criticism" implied of anyone and that he hoped the representatives "would cut us a little slack."

These appointed offices would make for "better planning, improved communication and unified fiscal" management, as well as for more sensible "personnel development."

He urged people to vote yes on the proposed change in town personnel structure so, "We can put our fiscal house in order." You can't manage money, Deely said, "in isolated little pockets."

He spoke principally to a vociferous group of opponents, including representative Edward Briggs, an assessor and chairman of the Democratic Town Committee, and assessor Chairman William Derrick, who echoed one another's sentiments in favor of keeping as many positions as possible on the voting rolls. Those men said they had talked to a lot of people who felt the same way they did.

Among those who did not was Representative Deidre Consolati, who favored the proposed changes because "life is more complex" than it used to be, more diverse and that "even though it (might mean) giving up some liberties, it was time to move on to a new era."

Moderator Joseph Toole, wasted no time in deciding that the close-sounding vote favored the ayes.

A less close "no" decision was made on a proposal to eliminate the college education requirements for candidates who apply for the administrator post. Almost everyone, audience and representative alike, agreed that the more officially qualified an applicant was, the better he might be able to perform.

Several people explained that the purpose of the measure to modify the job qualififcations was time town employees who had performed complex tasks for many years without benefit of higher education could apply.

One representative said he wanted to make sure the selection process did not become "a local person issue," and he hoped no matter who was selected that "she might enjoy the job."

So, sometime after Jan. 1, 1992, a candidate with either a bachelor's or master's degree and several years of municipal management experience, will probably be hired by the start of fiscal 1993, or July 1, 1992.

More confusing were the spending issues, which drew little debate except from those directly affected, such as school personnel. A few questions were raised but most of the measures were simply voted through.

Here are the key actions as delegates voted to cut and paste expenses in order to keep within a budget cap based on cuts required after last May's annual town meeting. They agreed to

• Advance $115,000 from free cash, certified by the state Department of Revenue, according to finance committee Chairman John DeVarennes, at $406,000, in order to hold the tax rate at $12 per $1,000 of assessed valuation, as well as to make up for other proposed cuts disallowed by the delegates, including,

• A $15,000 deletion from the school budget of $4.307 million, a cut the delegates denied after listening to pleas from Superintendent Henry Zukowski and school committee Chairman Edward Lahey.

• To rescind $33,900 voted for at the May meeting to repair the roof on the Hyde wing of the Central School, a move that delegate Briggs called "penny wise and pound foolish." Delegate Laurence Whitman suggested private donations and voluntary labor for the project, offering his own services as a sure thing.

• To stop mailing annual town reports and make them available for hand pickup at three locations in town seven days before annual town meeting. The move saves half the $6,000 spent on distributing and printing the document.

All in all, the spending actions deleted about $225,000 from the original version of the budget.

Lee 5, Taconic 2 Eagle 10-2-91

PITTSFIELD — Cinella has a recent spate of game-tying and game-winning goals. Yesterday, Cinella pounded home the backbreaker midway through the second half, knocking in her second goal of the game 26 seconds after Taconic's Turner had tallied to cut the Lee lead to 3-2.

"Cinella and [Sharon] Heath give Lee two quick forwards," Taconic coach Billy Flynn said. "Lee was able to beat us to the ball and pass around us."

Goals: Lee — Cinella (2), Heath, Blaisdell, Kasey McManmon. Taconic — Shauna McMahon, Mickie Turner.

Brian Sullivan / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee High defender Kelsey Scarpa, right, looks to keep the ball away from Taconic's Mickie Turner yesterday at the Taconic field.

8

Lee board to seek engineering bids on plan to close, cap town landfill

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 10-8-91

LEE — Lee's Board of Public Works last night voted to seek bids from engineering firms on preparation of a plan for closing and capping the town landfill on Woodland Road next summer, a project that consulting engineers have said might cost as much as $45,000.

One resident who spoke to the board said the landfill closure has become a bone of contention among elderly and retired residents on fixed incomes because they face increased costs for disposal once closure is complete.

The town plans to have its domestic refuse hauled to the Vicon Recovery Associates incinerator in Pittsfield, starting Dec. 1 or thereabouts.

Although the town has authority to purchase additional land next to the present site for a new landfill, a majority of board members feel the cost of installing a new landfill under the latest state Department of Environmental Protection regulations would be as much and probably more than the cost of the Vicon agreement.

Move transfer station

The vote to seek engineering bids came during prolonged discussion of the landfill's fate at a meeting in Memorial Town Hall where the board also voted to ask the Daley & Sons Trucking company to remove its transfer station from the landfill site by next April 1.

Daley rents 8,000 square feet at the landfill for the transfer station in which the company collects and compacts refuse that cannot be buried in the landfill but which can be disposed of in large commercial landfills in the Connecticut Valley.

John Piacquadio, who has been elected chairman of the BPW, said the transfer station must be moved before the landfill closure begins.

The Public Works Board, along with the Board of Public Health, which has authority over the landfill, recommended to the Selectmen last month that the memorandum of understanding be signed with Vicon to incinerate the refuse.

Incineration will cost $70 a ton, payable by the commercial haulers, like Daley, that will pick up trash at the curb and drive it to Pittsfield. Under the agreement, Vicon will allow up to four separate haulers bring rubbish from Lee.

Pickup fees

No one knows yet what the charge to householders will be, but based on experience in other towns that have signed similar memorandums some town officials are estimating it could come to $25 a week, on average.

Customers who have their refuse picked up now pay about $20 a week for hauling to the landfill. But according to the resident who addressed the board last night, August Passetto of Leonard Street, those who take their own rubbish to the landfill — as many retired people do — pay only $25 a year, which is the cost of a resident's landfill permit.

For many of those residents, turning to commercial haulers will be a financial hardship, he argued. Their costs, on average, would jump from $25 to $300 a year, based on the $25-a-week figure.

He also observed that an engineering firm in the 1970s, Brown Associates Pittsfield, had estimated the Lee landfill would last until 1995. It was opened in 1974. The estimate was conservative, said BPW member Martin Barensky, because the town's public works superintendent, J. Peter Scolforo, just calculated last week that, at the present rate of landfilling, there is about five years' worth of space left.

But Piacquadio and board member David Parker said new landfill regulations require closure before that point is reached. No present landfill can be operated after Dec. 31, 1993, unless it has an impervious liner under the refuse and has a drainage system to collect leachate. Lee's present landfill has neither of these features.

Relicensing cost

Furthermore, operation of existing landfills after July 1 next year will require relicensing just for the period through the end of '93.

Scolforo recommended closure next summer to avoid the relicensing costs. The cost of preparing the closure is enough by itself, several board members appeared to agree. That's why they called for competitive bids.

Paint, oil, poisons collected in Lee

By Carol Sliwa
Berkshire Eagle Staff 10-6-91

LEE — On most days, a steady stream of cars packed with hazardous wastes descending onto a public parking lot would be an alarming sight for any health department official.

But yesterday marked the biannual collection day for hazardous household wastes, and Tri-Town Health Department officials welcomed the pesticides, paint sludge and used motor oil with open arms.

A total of 196 households — 105 from Lee, 47 from Lenox and 44 from Stockbridge — dumped off their unwanted refuse at the Lee Department of Public Works garage, and Lenox High School pitched in some extra chemicals for the cause.

Peter Kolodziej, director for the Tri-Town Health Department, credited yesterday's high turnout to a public education campaign headed by his assistant, Diane Larrivee.

The fruits of her labor were 25 drums filled with waste. Among the materials earmarked to leave the county were: four 30-gallon barrels of pesticides, three 55-gallon barrels of paint sludge, one 55-gallon barrel of paint liquid, two 55-gallon barrels of small paint cans, two 55-gallon barrels of motor oil, two 5-gallon barrels of soaps and cleaners, two 55-gallon barrels of aerosols, one 55-gallon barrel of glycols (such as antifreeze and water-based developers) and one 5-gallon barrel of alkaline batteries.

The only materials turned away yesterday were a couple of smoke alarms (those must be sent back to the manufacturer) and nontoxic items such as pharmaceuticals and latex paint, according to David Cunliffe, project manager for Laidlaw Environmental Services of the Northeast.

$12,000 spent

The three participating towns had voted to expend a total of $12,000 for Laidlaw to conduct the collection — with $5,000 appropriated by Lee, $4,000 by Lenox and $3,000 by Stockbridge.

"The support this year has

HAZARDOUS, continued on B6

■ HAZARDOUS, from B1

been tremendous from the community," said Kolodziej. "Even though budgets are tight, there wasn't much debate about this program."

Laidlaw is paid by the barrel for its services, with the cost of the barrel depending on the material with which it's filled.

For instance, a 55-gallon barrel of paint sludge or liquid costs $395 to remove — the same fee charged for a 30-gallon barrel of pesticides.

A 55-gallon barrel of aerosol cans is slightly less, at $375. And a 55-gallon barrel of motor oil, which can be reprocessed, is considerably less, at $100 a drum.

Laidlaw was informed that the towns had $12,000 to spend, and when that limit was reached, the company could not accept any more refuse. However, Larrivee said the collection finished right on cue, with the total cost expected to be approximately $12,000.

Yesterday's event marked the fourth such collection in South County, Larrivee said, and judging from the comments of the tri-town residents who participated, the money appeared to be well spent.

"I was talking to someone at just about every car," she said, "and everyone was very pleased to have the opportunity to dispose of things in this way. People are more aware and very glad to have the opportunity."

The participants, who sometimes waited in long lines, were rewarded for their patience. Each received a 6-pound box of Arm & Hammer baking soda with a list of instructions for its many potential uses, which range from laundry detergent, dandruff shampoo, toothpaste and underarm deodorant to oven, drain and toilet bowl cleaner.

"We're trying to get people to think about the fact that most of those cleaners they use just don't have to be used," said Larrivee. "They're just sold to people on TV.

"And the problem is not just getting rid of them," she continued, "but the chemicals — which are suspected of causing nerve damage or cancer — that people are being exposed to their whole lives."

Use safer materials

She said if people use and seek out products that are less toxic, more and more companies might produce and market less hazardous materials.

Larrivee extended the health department's thanks to Arm & Hammer for the donation of the baking soda, which was distributed through the Berkshire Conservation District.

She also extended words of appreciation to Mead Paper Co., for its assistance with publicity, and the Lee Kiwanis and Dr. Ronald E. Myers, for their assistance with traffic control. Myers is a member of the Berkshire County Board of Health Association.

The Tri-Town Health Department termed the event a "rousing success," and unlike the last such collection, no one who showed up during the posted hours was turned away.

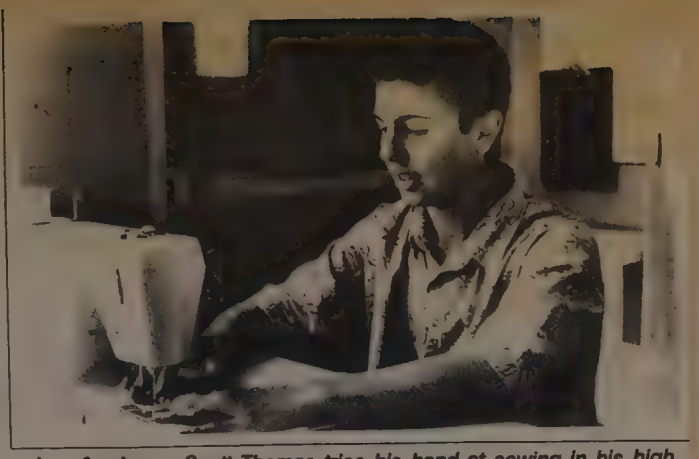
Lee program gets freshmen off to a running start

Adrocate 10-9-91

By Gina Gold

Lee High School's class of '95 will be more studious, more responsible, and more motivated than the class of '92 -- if all goes as planned, says Principal Richard Salinetti.

This September, Lee High School introduced the Freshman Seminar, an innovative program that teaches incoming students how to study, socialize and solve problems. The program also broadens students' horizons through required classes in music, art, technology and home and business management. Continued on page 16



Lee freshman *Scott Thomas tries his hand at sewing in his high school's new life skills program.*

Lee High freshmen learn classy new skills

Continued from page 1

"This is an experiment," says Salinetti, an enthusiastic supporter of the new program. "The Curriculum Study Committee developed the seminar because it was clear that ninth-graders needed instruction in the basics like note taking, how and when to study and how to work in groups. We also wanted them to experience subjects that they might never have selected on their own. Hopefully we'll spark undiscovered interests and develop some cultural literacy."

The yearlong seminar is coordinated by popular Dean of Students Kathleen Bort. Bort explains that the Freshman Seminar is based on hands-on teaching techniques that have students learning, not from a blackboard, but from active participation in group projects.

"After two weeks of working on learning styles, time-management and communications skills, we split the freshmen into four heterogeneous groups," she explains. On a four-week rotation, each group spends one period a day going into a specific subject. Kids in the music class learn to analyze composition styles including rap, hip-hop and jive. The art class is learning pottery making.

In teacher Deborah Maroney's Life Skills class, football players huddle around a sewing machine discussing hemming strategies. They are the sewers in a sweat-shirt production line. Other students are pinners and inspectors. The class assignment is to create a sweat-shirt manufacturing company that produces, markets and sells the garments.

"We're learning how to work cooperatively," says Sharon Taillefer, who is carefully checking her fabric. "This is pretty fun and I like that the class is pass-or-fail. But I suppose if you give everyone in your group a hard time, you might not pass."

Technology teacher Nicholas Caimano has his students building "mouse-trap missile launchers," small mechanical vehicles that travel a few feet before launching pingpong balls into the air.

"I gave each team some mousetraps, wheels, rubber bands, strings and straws," Caimano explains. "Then I gave them a few guidelines and let them figure out how to build it themselves. A lot of kids had trouble at first because they're not used to having so much freedom; they've always had things spelled out. But eventually they got it and started having fun."

Fourteen-year-old Trisha Castronova's group is working on the trial run of their mouse-trap launcher. The vehicle works well, she explains, but the launching mechanism trips too early. "See, we're tying to get this to travel to there (she points to a line on the floor) and *then* launch the pingpong ball." When asked if she would have chosen to take the Technology class, Castronova says no. But her group says she contributed to the project and has a flair for mechanical design. She agrees. "I always wanted to do something like this, but I never knew how."

Principal Richard Salinetti says the Freshman Seminar is the only program of its kind in south county. "The other schools haven't asked us about it yet," he says, "but I have a feeling they'll be looking over our shoulders soon."

The program took a year-and-a-half to develop and cost the school $2,000 in materials. Salinetti says it is too early to measure the success of the seminar, though students and teachers will be asked for their opinions at regular intervals.

Next semester, Lee High School's 75 freshmen will begin the term with a goal-setting workshop; then they'll start another rotation in the four subject areas. At the end of each semester, the students participate in a community-service project.

Seventeen-year-old senior Jennifer Finnegan had a chance to sit in on some of the Freshman Seminar classes. "I really wish we'd had somthing like this when I was a freshman," she says. "It looks like a great way for them to get to know each other and it also looks fun."

Lee board sets hearing on tax rate

Eagle 10-9-91

LEE — The Board of Assessors plans to set the town's tax rate next week after a required public hearing on tax classification. The hearing is scheduled for Tuesday night.

If predictions made at the special town meeting Sept. 26 are borne out, the new rate may be the same as the old one, or at best only a few cents higher.

In a period of economic recession and high unemployment, this will presumably be good news to taxpayers.

The tax rate that was in effect for fiscal 1991 was $12 for each $1,000 of assessed valuation. At the time of the annual town meeting last May, the Finance Committee had prepared calculations showing the rate could climb above that point by anywhere from 34 cents to 99 cents depending on the size of the eventual town budget.

The voters, however, sent a resounding message in the annual election that they want town spending held in check or cut; and so, on Sept. 26, town meeting meeting representatives approved a budget — $8.44 million — that avoided a dreaded override of the Proposition 2½ tax-limiting law and pared requests for money for a wide range of services.

Further, they voted to put $115,000 from free cash toward this year's tax levy, a recommendation of Finance Committee Chairman John E. DeVarennes.

So, next week's hearing on tax classification will provide a forum for the setting of the new tax rate, which will come after the Selectmen have approved the classification that the Assessors recommend.

Since the introduction of classification in the 1980s, Lee has held to a single classification for all property, residential, industrial and commercial. Elizabeth Lartivee, the Assessors' assistant, said the board will recommend on Tuesday that that practice continue.

The hearing will be part of the regular Selectmen's meeting at Town Hall and will begin at 8 p.m. The meeting is set for Tuesday because of the Columbus Day holiday on Monday.

Friday, October 11, 1991 Berkshire Record

Lee Weighs '93 Budget Strategy

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—Telling him Monday night after his presentation to selectmen that he runs "a great dog and pony show," Selectman Martin Deeley advised finance committee Chairman John DeVarennes to present his strategy for creating a 1993 budget to representatives of all town departments.

So, selectmen set November 4 as the date for a public meeting for all department heads to meet with the finance committee to figure out how the town will operate within the $205,000 Proposition 2 1/2 cap.

The 7:30 p.m. session will be held in Memorial Hall in the new court room.

DeVarennes, armed with charts, which he taped to the newly-painted walls of the selectmen's office, explained that town insurance costs are expected to rise by 18 percent to total $742,200, the biggest single budget item after schools. Other set expenses that will historically increase annually, including retirement funds, street light costs, Medicare taxes, staff wages and utilities already account for $171,000 of the $205,000 cap.

DeVarennes will ask department heads to conform to a budget process that will require turning in their budget estimates and proposed cuts to keep within the cap sometime in January.

He also wants them sometime just before May town meeting to list their 1992 appropriations and their expected underruns or overruns of their budgets.

Gaining support from selectmen for the process, DeVarennes also said he would like to see a repeat of this year's process when the budget was sort of set at annual town meeting.

Pipe rupture forces shutoff of Lee High heating system

Eagle 10-17-91

LEE — A 29-year-old cast iron hot-water main ruptured Tuesday night at Lee High School, forcing a temporary shutoff of the heating system and emergency measures to repair the break yesterday and today.

Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said severe rusting was the cause of the rupture, which prompted him to call a special meeting of the School Committee yesterday at 8 a.m. The committee agreed on emergency repairs that Zukowski last night said probably would cost between $10,000 and $15,000.

General contractor Thomas Garrity of the LB Corp. on Valley Mill Street had concrete workers on the job yesterday along with steamfitters who will replace not only the ruptured pipe but five others in the same channel that Zukowski said also show signs of severe deterioration.

The pipes are the same ones installed when the school was constructed in 1962. They are cast iron pipes 3 inches in diameter. For much of their length, they lie in underground caches or channels outside the one-story brick-and-block school. Sections 25 to 30 feet long will be replaced.

Classes will not be suspended, Zukowski said. The temperature in the building yesterday afternoon was in the low 70s and should remain sufficiently comfortable today, he suggested. The building retains heat well, he added.

One benefit of the rupture will be the installation of sectional valves that will enable maintenance workers to shut off heat to the south half of the building, if necessary, while continuing to supply heat to the north half.

Last December, a similar pipe rupture about 70 feet north of the present one forced suspension of classes for two days in frigid weather and ended up costing some $23,000.

Tuesday's break occurred outside the high school's metal shop.

Generals, Lee battle to 1-1 tie

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Girls' soccer

Lee and Pittsfield High didn't disappoint yesterday, the two Berkshire County girls' soccer powers playing an exciting 1-1 tie at the Lee field.

The Wildcats, who enjoy an eight-point lead over Hoosac in the Southern Division, have now earned ties against the Northern Division elite — Mount Greylock, Wahconah and Pittsfield.

"We're happy with that," said Lee goalie Dina Souza, who thought Wahconah would emerge from the logjam in the North and meet the Wildcats for the second straight year in the Berkshire County title game. "We graduated some good players and it's been a challenge this year. But our three best games have been those three games against the North."

Lee coach Sally Maish is also satisfied with the three deadlocks against the top North teams.

"In each game we had to come from behind to tie," Maish said. "That tells me I have a team that doesn't give up."

The Generals, meanwhile, slipped into third place after leading the North in the early part of the race. After an 8-0 win over Drury on Sept. 24, Pittsfield has three ties and one defeat in its last four games.

"We're still moving in the right direction," said Pittsfield coach Pat West, noting that the recent spate of games have been against tough opponents. "Today's second half was as well as we've played all year."

Also yesterday, Wahconah maintained first place in the North with a 2-0 win over Lenox while Mount Greylock moved past Pittsfield into second place with a 2-0 win over St. Joseph's. Taconic needed a late score from Sarah Kreiger to tie Mount Everett while Hoosac defeated Monument 1-0.

Pittsfield 1, Lee 1

LEE — The Generals' Tricia Schultz took a short pass from Marie Pothier in the goal area and scored about five minutes into the game. Lee tied the game 1-1 about 20 minutes into the first stanza when A.J. Skowron scored off a mid-air volley from about 18 yards out.

Lee's Souza and Pittsfield's Erica Williams were superb in the second half. Williams stopped a point-blank drive by Lee's Katie Cinella with about eight minutes left in the game while Souza needed a smothering save to halt Pittsfield's Stacey Havener about 90 seconds later.

Goals: Lee — Skowron. Pittsfield — Schultz.
Assists: Lee — Cinella. Pittsfield — Marie Pothier.
Goalies: Lee — Souza, 7 saves. Pittsfield — Williams, 13 saves.
Jayvees: Lee, 4-1.

Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee's A.J. Skowron, right, has designs on keeping control of the ball while Pittsfield's Amy Sucharzewski hopes to move in defensively and stop the play.

Berkshire Record 10/18/91

Lee's Official Town Records Will Now Be Goatskin-Bound

LEE—Previously disintegrating and flaking, stained and powdery, the town's records have been saved.

Thanks to a $7,000 town meeting appropriation and strict attention to conservation detail by Town Clerk Patricia Carlino, births, deaths and a good deal in-between are now preserved between covers of something called Hewitt's goatskin.

The books come in blues and browns and are etched with gold, or something that looks just like it.

The work is being done by Brown's River Bindery in Essex, Vermont, and may be seen by bibliophiles and historians alike at Carlino's office in Memorial Hall.

They'll be on display, selectmen said, at next May's annual town meeting.

Carlino was overheard to say that she was very proud of her books.

Lee holding line on tax rate of $12

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 10-17-91

LEE — Assessors Edward M. Briggs and Edward F. Murray told the Selectmen Tuesday night that the town's tax rate is not official yet, but they expect it will be the same as last year, $12 for each $1,000 of valuation.

The state Department of Revenue must still verify the town's budgeting arithmetic and determine that deductions and other details are in compliance with the law, said Briggs, but he expected the confirmation in time for tax bills to be mailed out around Nov. 1.

Single classification

He and Murray represented the Board of Assessors — Chairman William F. Derrick was absent — at the Selectmen's meeting in Memorial Town Hall where they all agreed that Lee taxes would be held this year under a single classification as in previous years.

In some communities, residential taxes are assigned one classification, commercial taxes another, and so on. Differences in classification mean differences in tax rate. Pittsfield, for example, places a higher rate on commercial than on residential property.

Total assessed valuation for Lee, the assessors said, is $399 million, of which $279 million, or 69.9 percent, is in residential property; $60 million, or 15.2 percent, is in commercial property; $45 million, or $11.3 percent, is in industrial property; and $3.6 million, or 3.6 percent, is in personal property.

The town budget is $8.44 million, of which about $4.8 million is to be raised from property taxes.

Other business

In other action, the Selectmen:

► Turned over to Robert Driscoll of High Street a check for $200 that Driscoll had turned over to the town in May 1990 as a bond in case a dog he owned got loose or generated any complaint during the succeeding 12 months.

The dog had been involved in at least four biting incidents, dog officer Richard Faber said at the time.

The year passed without incident, but Driscoll didn't return for his check until September. By then, the dog had bitten a 12-year-old Dublin Street boy, and Town Clerk Patricia D. Carlino told Driscoll he would have to provide written verification that the dog had been destroyed by a veterinarian, as required by the town.

Driscoll, who supplied the verification Tuesday night, said he tried "six times" to get the check back, and finally brought a lawyer, Don C. Hunter, to confer with the Selectmen. Hunter said the Selectmen owed Driscoll an apology at the least. He should have received the check when he first asked for it, said Hunter, because the conditions under which it had placed in escrow had been met.

Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa said she knew the Selectmen had agreed in May 1990 to the one-year escrow period, but said she didn't think about it again until the latest incident. For this lapse, she said, she apologized.

► Accepted the bid of O'Connell Oil Associates of Pittsfield on fuel oil for town buildings for the winter. O'Connell's bid was 75.5 cents a gallon. The only other bid was from Mass Energy & Oil Inc. of Pittsfield at 78 cents a gallon.

Town Hall, the town-owned Airoldi Building on Railroad Street and the two fire stations, on Main Street and on Route 102 in South Lee, are the main buildings to be heated. The School Department heats the school buildings.

► Received but took no action on a copy of a letter from First Golf Corp. of Denver, Colo., stating interest in "assisting the town government of Lee" in acquiring and building a municipal golf course on 124 acres off Fairview Street south of the Massachusetts Turnpike.

The letter had been sent to John E. Wells of Pittsfield, a member of the Professional Golfers Association, from First Golf on the assumption that Lee might be interested in developing the Fairview Street property, being marketed by Isgood Realty Inc. First Golf says it plans, builds and finances golf courses and then leases or sells them to municipalities.

Lee already has a member-owned golf course, Greenock, on West Park Street.

Lee Selectmen Pay $200 to Owner Of Dog They Ordered Destroyed

LEE—An angry resident appeared with his lawyer before selectmen Tuesday demanding to know why he hadn't been paid the money the town owed him.

And a less than contrite board of selectmen apologized anyway and they cut a check for $200 and handed it to Robert Driscoll of High Street.

Driscoll pointed out to board members Diane Roosa and Martin Deely (Joseph Dupont was absent) that he had lived up to his end of the bargain by destroying his dog, but that selectmen had failed to honor theirs.

Driscoll's dog was ordered destroyed last week after several incidents of biting, the most recent one of which involved a 12-year-old boy who required 23 stitches.

In May 1990, after at least two complaints about the dog, selectmen said Driscoll could keep the animal only if he posted $200 with the town for a year and agreed to have the dog destroyed if it bit anyone else.

May 1991 went by but Driscoll's money was not forthcoming.

And then in September the dog bit Joshua Koloski of Robert Street and selectmen ordered the dog put down.

Driscoll's lawyer Don Hunter said he was hard-pressed to give a good reason to his client for the selectmen's intransigence about the money.

Driscoll said he'd been to town hall at least six time to collect and had been thwarted. Town staff members disputed his accounts.

Selectman Deely said Driscoll should understand that the real problem was with this dog, after all, but Driscoll wanted his money in any case.

He pointed out he now had to pay a lawyer to get what was rightfully his. Meanwhile, he'll soon get a bill for $54 from a veterinarian who destroyed the dog.

Selectman Chairman Roosa said as soon as she heard about the money she ordered a check made out, perhaps forgetting that the two hundred dollars in town escrow had been mentioned at least four weeks before in an open meeting.

Driscoll left after receiving his money and a rather begrudging apology.

Consolatis Should Be Proud of Accomplishments

Berkshire Record 10/18/91

To The Editor:

I happened to see a picture of the four Consolati brothers—John, Peter, Frank, and Leon—celebrating their first reunion at Sandy Beach at Laurel Lake to pay homage to their family migration from a lake in northern Italy, Lago di Gardi, to Lee. About fifty members attended.

I can with all sincerity say that the Consolati is a household name in Lee for their many accomplishments, generosity, and contribution, not only to people of Italian descent but also to its community.

To mention all their deeds and the 100% support from their spouses would be impossible. So I will try to give a thumbnail sketch of eachone's career.

Frank was the first son of a Italian immigrant to work his way and paid his own tuition and to graduate from college. He owns a very successful insurance business but his greatest achievement is being president of the Lee National Bank. He ran a farm for many years and at the present time his hobby is to raise and train race horses, also an avid sports fan.

John was a teacher in the Lee school system for over 40 years, and also coached two sports that length of time, and the townspeople saw fit to honor him in naming the Lee High School football field in his honor. He was also an excellent athlete at the University of Mass. and graduated with honors. In the summertime he helps run a summer camp at the Marian Fathers for teenagers.

Peter ran the Lee Hardware Store for many years, with great success, and also played sports and was very active with the Lee Sons of Italy organization.

Leon, the youngster of them all, was head at a paper mill in Lee for over 40 years. His pride joy is to follow the success of his grandchildren who are stars at Monument Mountain High School. At present he is a bartender at a Lee establishment.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention their mother, Theresa. She exemplified many of the traits of the saintly nun Mother Theresa because of her strong faith in God, his kindness, dedication, love for the family, and her many friends.

To all the Consolati families, may it be sons, daughters, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, I know down deep in my heart they all appreciate very much the fine example that has been set before them, and to keep up the fine tradition of the Consolati name.

Emilio Grap Passetto
Housatonic

12

Locker Room granted three weeks to settle dispute with neighbors

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 10-18-91

LEE — The wrangle over parking and noise at the Locker Room Sports Bar & Lounge on upper Main Street will have to wait at least three more weeks for settlement. The Selectmen on Tuesday night called on parties in the dispute to return on Nov. 12 and see if they can reach accord then.

The postponement, said Selectman Martin H. Deely, should give bar owners William LaGrant and Donald J. Lucy time to survey, pave and mark their parking lot on School Street and make arrangements for renting or leasing additional parking space on the other side of Main Street.

It should also provide time to determine if other steps by LaGrant and Lucy to curb noise and unseemly behavior by bar patrons are effective, he said.

There should be time "to see what can be worked out," said Deely.

Selectmen Chairman Diane P. Roosa, who at first said she thought the bar should receive a written reprimand, eventually concurred on the postponement. The Selectmen serve as the town's licensing authority.

But Marguerite Tristany, speaking for herself and her parents, Mario and Josephine Tristany, who live next door to the bar, called on the Selectmen for a hearing to impose conditions consisting of a curfew, a noise-restriction requirement, correction of the parking problem and unannounced monitoring by the police.

"With all due respect," she said, "I don't think my family can take much more of this." She had maintained two weeks ago, and repeated Tuesday night, that noise from the bar on occasion has been loud enough to permit her to tape-record it from inside a window in her parents' house. Most of the noise is loud music, she said, but some of it has been from loud voices and foul remarks.

She no longer calls the bar to ask that the noise be reduced, she said. "They turn it down for 10 minutes and then it goes back up louder than before."

She also said space her family owns behind the house where family members park their cars is frequently occupied or blocked by cars parked by bar patrons.

Don C. Hunter, the lawyer representing Lucy and LaGrant, said his clients are in discussion with William R. O'Connell of Pittsfield for lease of part of a lot he owns across Main Street from the tavern. "It's a huge lot," he said, "and will relieve the parking problem entirely."

He also said LaGrant and Lucy have agreed to hire a surveyor to survey their parking lot and mark it off from the abutting Tristany parking space, have hired off-duty policemen to patrol the parking lot, have insulated and enclosed windows on the Tristanys' side to muffle noise, and have placed an alarm over a rear exit door to alert bartenders in case it is opened.

Furthermore, said Lucy, the tavern will be closed an hour earlier, 1 a.m. instead of 2. "I think it will keep the last-call crowd from coming from wherever they're coming from," he said.

The Locker Room, in a building at 232 Main St. that Lucy and LaGrant purchased from Mario Tristany last summer, has been in business barely two months. Hunter has characterized the parking and related problems as a result of the bar's being "wildly successful beyond all expectations."

The Tristanys aren't the only complainants. M. James Scarafoni, proprietor of Lee Liquors on the other side of School Street from the tavern, said last month that bar patrons were parking where his own patrons ought to park.

And Jack and Carole Murphy of 30 Canal Street submitted a letter that Roosa read aloud Tuesday night saying the Locker Room owners "have a responsibility to the town and its citizens."

The Murphys reported that a van had been driven into their house at 2 a.m. Sept. 30 and the driver, after rocking and spinning backward and forward several times to free the van, hitting the house "repeatedly," eventually drove to another house on their street before stopping. He was "unable to stand when found by police," they said.

Police said the driver and some other occupants of the same house, one seemingly unconscious in bed and the other asleep at the wheel of his truck when found that same morning, had been drinking at the Locker Room "for a number of hours," approximately 12.

The Locker Room is a long block and a half from Canal Street.

The Murphys asked that the Selectmen "do everything in your power to curb excesses before a major tragedy."

Scarafoni said Tuesday night that his parking differences with the Locker Room had been satisfactorily resolved. And Louis Brown, who lives in an apartment across School Street from the tavern, said he has had his apartment windows open at night and has heard no noise. "I live only 35 feet away" from the Locker Room, he said.

Marguerite Tristany, who said her parents' house was on the side closest to the music, told the Selectmen she wanted a written statement explaining why her request for a hearing was denied.

Century Cable Adds The Monitor Channel

LEE — Century Berkshire Cable has added The Monitor Channel to its program offerings over channel 48.

Century serves this town, Lenox, Stockbridge and Great Barrington.

The Monitor Channel, an affiliate of The Christian Science Monitor newspaper, is a 24-hours-a-day news and global affairs channel with 60 hours of original programming each week.

Century gave area teachers an overview of Monitor Channel's classroom programs on Oct. 2 at Lee High School. The classroom program airs at 4 p.m. daily.

THE BERKSHIRE COURIER's telephone number is 528-3020, and we're at 268 Main St., Great Barrington, ready to receive your news, subscriptions and advertising.

OCT 24 91

Haulers fighting for Lee's garbage

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff 10/24/91

LEE — Daley & Sons, the granddaddy of trash collectors in town, is facing increased competition from the Lenox Trucking Co., which is planning to undercut Daley's trash pickup rates when the town landfill closes.

But Nelson Daley isn't losing sleep. Even though his mom-and-pop company couldn't match Lenox Trucking's price, he doesn't expect to lose customers, he said.

Daley charges $15 per month for residential garbage collection now and figures he will have to go to $22 or $23 when the dump closes. Lenox Trucking charges $2 per week and expects to solicit customers with a guaranteed rate of $15 a month for a full year.

"It's common knowledge Bill Vahle doesn't have to make a living in the rubbish business," Daley said Tuesday night. "I do." But Vahle says he can make a nice profit at the rates he'll be charging.

Vahle, owner of Lenox Trucking and several other businesses, concentrates his garbage pickup in Lenox. He said Tuesday he recently signed up another 30 customers in Lee, bringing his clientele up to more than 200.

Dec. 1 is the approximate date set for closing the landfill, and the town's garbage haulers will have to transport trash to the Vicon incinerator in Pittsfield. Dumping garbage at Vicon will cost more, so Lee customers must pay more for their trash pickup.

At $15 per month, said Daley, Vahle will be losing money. Tipping fees at Vicon currently are $72 per ton and are expected to rise in January, he said.

"There's no room for profit whatsoever," he said, noting that Vahle, with several sources of income, has a reputation for undercutting the trucking competition with big discounts.

But Vahle said he'll make plenty of money by adding more Lee residents at a lower price.

"We'll make a hell of a lot, we won't lose money," he said. He said he makes $20 per month per household in Lenox and can charge less in Lee because the town picks up recyclables.

For years the truckers have dumped the Lee garbage at the landfill. But Lee officials have agreed to close the landfill and begin hauling the town's garbage to the Vicon plant off Hubbard Avenue, Pittsfield.

The landfill on Woodland Road will be capped sometime next year.

Daley said his rates probably will be less than the $25 stated by the Board of Public Works but not as low as Vahle's $15. He said the price will be flexible for people with less garbage, or for elders on fixed incomes. He said he is confident that most of his customers will remain loyal to the hometown hauler.

Vahle operates out of Lenox Dale.

Daley said he won't set a definite price until he knows for sure exactly when the landfill will close. Public Works Board Chairman John L. Piacquadio said Dec. 1 is the targeted closing date, but Daley is not convinced it will happen so soon.

1991 Lee High Girls Varsity Soccer

Photo by Warren Fowler

Bottom row—Dina Souza, Cherie Nolan, Ellie Verdi, Felicia Piacentino, Carrie Angers, Karen Scheurer, Sharon Heath, Maureen Kennedy, Manager Michelle Kennedy; **back row**—Coach Gordon Thompson, Coach Sally Maish, Sarah Blaisdell, Kelsey Scarpa, Kathleen Salinetti, Sheila Collins, Kate Cinella, Jennifer Finnegan, Kasey McMannon, AJ Skowron, Lisa Schoppe, Manager Amy DiMario, Coach Donna Bruce

Berkshire Record - 10/25/91.

Collision at midfield during recent Lee—Lenox girls soccer match.

Berkshire Record 11/15/91.

1991 Lee High Boys Varsity Soccer

Record staff photo

Standing—Mike Consolati, Matt Kelly, Harold Villar, Jimmy Braim, Aaron Brighenti, Ralph Olds, Richard Wescott, Fabio Villar, Rod Hunsicker, Coach Jim Perkins; **bottom row**—Paul Consolati, Chris Eccher, Jon Clark, P. J. LePrevost, Craig Simmons, Mike Puntin, Kevin Burch, and Josh Shaw

Berkshire Record 10/25/91

1991 Lee High Varsity Football

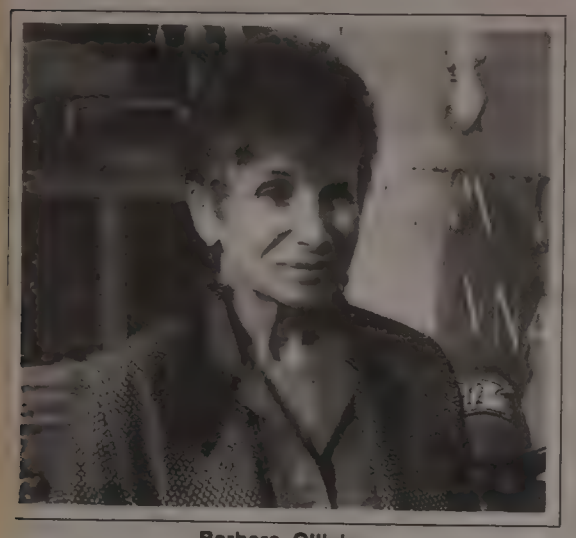
Photo by Paul Kakley

First row—Bill Jansen, Andy Boyne, Jeff Puleri, Todd Gailes, Tim Shepardson, Jake Naventi, Jason Vaninetti, Joe Abderhalden, Matt Puntin, Chris Peetros, Chris Tisdale; **second row**—Scott Methe, Eric Schneider, Gabe Naventi, Mike Naventi, Micah Stone, Mike Hall, Mike Curtin, Mark Cutin, Matt Schilling, Josh LaGrant; **third row**—Pete DiGrigoli, Matt Carlino, Tony Porrini, BJ Perfetto, Scott Thomas, Derek Walker, Bill Roche, Rick Methe, Ben Simmons, Caleb Cebral; **fourth row**—Steve Seward, Tim Ashe, Jason Willey, David Walker, Joe Baczek, Pat Day, J. R. Wheeler, Jason Bliss, Mark Walker; **fifth row**—Jimmy Shepardson, J. D. Reber, Steve Curtin.

Berkshire Record 10/25/91

Lee VNA

Group aims to help home health caregivers



Barbara Ollivier

When Beverly Kaplan moved to Becket with her husband three years ago she envisioned living their retirement years in the open spaces of the Berkshires.

But her husband contracted Alzheimer's disease, and Kaplan has found herself tending to him, confined to her home in the woods.

"The day-to-day living is so repressive," Kaplan, 62, says. "I'd like to pursue my own life, but I can't. There are so many problems. Because I'm home all the time, I haven't been able to exercise. I've gained 20 pounds. I feel all caved in. I've really had a hard time."

Kaplan -- like an increasing number of elderly wives, husbands and adult children with ailing parents -- is a home health caregiver. With the exception of two hours a day when a Lee Visiting Nurse Association nurse visits, watching her husband is a 24-hour-a-day job, and she needs relief.

To try to help Kaplan and others in similar situations, Lee VNA social worker Barbara Ollivier is starting a support group for home health caregivers.

"There are a lot of people out there in almost the same situation," Ollivier says. "The caregivers are under tremendous stress. It's a very demanding job. Whether you're visiting a parent once or twice a day at a nursing home or taking care of them at home, it's very hard. They're feeding them, bathing them, taking care of the in every way."

Continued on page 9

South Advocate Oct 31-91

Lee VNA starts support group

Continued from page 1

With a support group, Ollivier says, caregivers can both share their experiences to both help relieve themselves of the emotional burden of their job and can offer advice to each other.

"The idea that children just ship their parents off to the nursing home and discard them isn't the case at all. There are so many people who are trying to help their parents or their spouses," she says.

Ollivier and other health experts say the trend will continue to increase. As the population grows older, the costs of nursing homes and hospitals go up and hospitals continue to eject patients on short timelines, more and more people will find themselves in similar situations to the Kaplans, Ollivier says.

The impact on a family can be devastating, Ollivier says. husbands who have never cooked a meal in their life are all of a sudden in charge of the household. Wives who didn't know how to balance a checkbook are thrust into handling a family's finances. Children who are trying to raise their own families and carry a job, now must take care of a parent as well.

"It can get very complicated," Ollivier says. "There are so many stresses involved. People have to understand that it's very normal to be angry."

Through a support group, Kaplan says she hopes to be able to discuss some of the problems she has experienced with people in similar situations. Also, on a different level, by meeting together, she says home caregivers can discuss ways to represent themselves better in the political arena.

Despite Massachusetts' reputation for favorable health-care laws, Kaplan says the laws now work against home health caregivers. State budget cuts have taken their toll on VNA services, she says, and tax laws disfavor home health caregivers, particularly people who have moved into Massachusetts from another state.

"I've learned that you can't protect your life's savings from catastrophic illness or the nursing homes," she says. "If people can get together, maybe we can create a more effective voice."

But almost by definition, Ollivier says it is hard to form an effective support group for home health caregivers. If one of the problems they face is finding time to get away from the house for themselves, how are they going to find the time for a support group and a meeting place in a rural area, Ollivier asks.

"One of the problems is that there isn't the transportation," Ollivier says. "Middle-aged people can't get away during the day. Older people aren't used to sharing their problems with a group. Most of the patients are poor. There are just so many obstacles."

"We've got to make this work. I know there are a lot more people out there that I don't even know about. It's really tough out there -- really, really, tough," she says.

Hogkins' petition to clear path for town administrator

LEE — State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, will petition the Legislature today to allow appointments to several Lee town government posts, clearing the way for the hiring of a town administrator.

Hodgkins' action today reflects the action of a Sept. 26 special town meeting, where representatives returned the special act creating a selectmen-administrator form of government to its original form, taking certain town boards and positions appointive rather than elective.

The change requires legislative approval, and means that the boards of assessors and health, as well as the positions of town clerk, treasurer and tax collector, will now be appointed posts. In the past they have been elected positions. Under the town administrator form of government, the administrator would have supervision over those appointed positions.

"I will file this amendment to establish the type of home rule government that those representatives feel is in the best interests of the town," said Hodgkins in a prepared statement released over the weekend.

To ensure quick movement of the amendment through the legislative process, Hodgkins has invited state Sen. Jane M. Swift, R-North Adams, to co-sponsor the legislation, and she has agreed to participate, said Hodgkins.

16

SouthAdvocate Oct 30 91

Lee DPW sticks to closing landfill-Dec. 1; says every option is costly

By Matthew J. Newman

Despite objections that the cost of disposing trash in Lee will more than triple, the Lee Department of Public Works reaffirmed its decision Monday to close the landfill Dec. 1 to residents. Trash will be hauled to the Vicon Resource Recovery incinerator in Pittsfield.

The decision means that residents will have to have their trash taken away by a hauler and that the monthly fee for trash disposals will increase dramatically.

DPW officials, who voted on the action several weeks ago, say the town's option are limited because the landfill is approaching capacity and state regulations will require millions of dollars of work to expand it.

About five residents at a meeting Monday spoke against the plan to use private haulers, saying the town should either take control of garbage collection, build a new landfill or set up a waste-transfer station.

But DPW Superintendent Peter Scolforo estimated each house would pay about $3 per garbage bag or up to $25 per month to one of two licensed haulers. Residents are anxious that the town will no longer have control over its solid waste disposal facilities and will be at the mercy of local haulers and out-of-town trash disposal companies. The two principle haulers, Daley & Sons and Lenox Trucking, have not set a fee for customers but are in the midst of a price war with each other for customers.

"Garbage isn't free," said DPW Board Chairman John L. Piacquadio. "Someone's got to pay for it."

Some residents supported using Vicon, arguing that the cost to bring garbage to other landfills in western Massachusetts will go up when more towns need to find an alternative site for their waste. Other people recommended looking into other alternatives to Vicon, such as co-composting or a more competitively priced incinerator.

"I think it is outrageous," said Louis Failla. "There are a lot of people who can't afford these rates."

But board members argued that since the state Department of Environmental Protection has mandated that the landfill be closed by Jan. 1, 1994, the town should not wait several years to make a deal with Vicon. No matter which option the town goes with, DPW officials say, disposal costs will be as high if not higher than the Vicon option.

"We are better off to lock into some place, than to risk the landfill price going up," Scolforo said.

Even though the landfill will be closed to residents by December, the town may allow businesses to continue to use the site to fill up about 50,000 cubic yards remaining until the landfill is capped. The money obtained from commercial dumping will be used to fund the estimated $1 million cost to close the landfill, according to Scolforo.

Matthew Newman is a free-lance writer who lives in Great Barrington.

town topics

Lee and Lenox want to treat water together to save money

Hoping to save money in water treatment costs, the Lee and Lenox selectmen have agreed to meet to discuss building and operating a water-treatment plant together for the Washington Mountain Brook project.

"It makes a lot of sense," Lenox Selectmen's Chairman John J. Pignatelli Jr. says. "Instead of both doing the same thing twice, we'd save money if we worked together on it."

A major obstacle, however, will be treating the water so that it will be chemically compatible with existing water systems in both Lee and Lenox. A meeting with selectmen and Department of Public Works officials from both towns will be held Nov. 18.

Record 11-1-91

Lee Trash Instructions

LEE—The town dump will be closed down December 1 for residential garbage, except for recyclables.

Between now and then residents must contact a specified licensed hauler who will do street pickup and then take the trash to the Vicon incinerator in Pittsfield. No cars from Lee are allowed at Vicon.

Four haulers may dump Lee trash at Vicon but so far only two have come forward, Daley & Sons and Lenox Trucking.

Residents, unless they have other plans, must either call Daley or Lenox or call town hall for other suggestions.

Both haulers now listed say they make special rate arrangements for those with limited incomes.

Recyclables will still be received at the usual landfill site.

The Berkshire Record, Friday, November 1, 1991

Lee School Meeting Views Future School Merger Goal

By Steven K. Smith
Special to The Record

Time is nipping at the heels of all concerned with local education.

"The year 2000 is very close and I"m getting very nervous," said a Lee parent at a recent information meeting on school regionalization.

Representatives from school committees in Otis, Tyringham, Lee, Lenox and Sandisfield wrestled yet again with this question and its implications at a Monday meeting initiated by Lee Superintendent Henry Zukowski and Lee School Committee Chairman Edward Lahey.

Most pressing for Lee is a plan by the Otis and Sandisfield schools to join in a new county region, thus possibly leaving Lee in the dust since Otis and Tyringham form part of the Lee district.

Recent tentative forays made by Lee into Lenox have met with stern responses from Lenox Superintendent Roland Miller, who is not yet convinced that merging their two districts is in the best interests of his schools.

The Lee-Lenox debate took center stage, although the meeting was ostensibly about South County.

The "Direction of Education Discussion," chaired by Lahey, highlighted the complexities, ambiguities and discord surrounding what he referred to as "the R word:" regionalization.

Perceived caution on the part of Lenox school officials was affirmed by statements from Lenox School Committee Chairman Thomas Romeo.

Cautioning that student needs, not regionalization for regionalization's sake was the issue, Romeo echoed Miller's thinking that mergers were not an end in themselves.

It was pointed out that collaboration between the two towns already exists:the two districts share specials needs, transportation and nutrition responsibilities.

Among the questions raised by several participants questioning regionalizing details were:

- Who would determine a standard curriculum?
- What accommodations to the physical plants would have to be made?
- What about common standards for graduation?
- How about staffing?
- Not the least question posed was who would pay for it all?

A Lenox resident was upset that increased taxes would be the path to financing mergers.

The consensus was that more discussion was critical if regional plans are to proceed. Participants agreed that this meeting should act as a catalyst for the future.

In particular Lahey said that principals should meet to investigate additional implications of joining together and report their findings to superintendents.

In a later telephone interview, Superintendent Zukowski said he was very pleased with the meeting and thought the most important part was the sense of future cooperation that emerged form the discussions.

Lee Awash in Dump-less Dilemma

Record 11-1-91

By Thelma O'Brien

What to Do With Your Trash in Lee, A11

LEE—With a delicious slip of the tongue, Public Works Board Chairman John Piacquadio summed up the town garbage dumping dilemma by saying, "We have to try to trash it out."

Thrashing or trashing, Piacquadio captured the spirit of the problem at a public works information meeting Monday about what to do with residential garbage when the town dump closes December 1.

The immediate effect for residents starting December 1, 1991, will be to contract privately with specified haulers (see related story), a move that will temporarily increase user fees from $25 a year for a landfill sticker to a monthly fee that may be as high as $20.

By state Department of Environment Protection order, all unlined landfills must close by December 31, 1993.

Public works and board of health officers, faced with that mandate, determined that early closing of the Woodland Road dump was advisable in order to arrange with Vicon Recovery Associates, an incinerator outfit in Pittsfield, to receive Lee residential trash.

The rationale was timing, according to DPW Superintendent J. Peter Scolfaro, who says now is the time to join Vicon: if Lee waits until the deadline, he feels, even though there is still space in the landfill, the town's trash might well be left by the side of the road.

Continuing with his colorful allusions and in anticipation of vigorous conflict, Chairman Piacquadio said the town was "on the horns of a dilemma about which way to go": build a transfer station, run a hauling operation or contract with haulers; put all the costs on the tax rate, or up the tax penalty by less and charge hauling or user fees, as well.

Whatever options are offered, the town "will have to go behind the curtain," said Scolfaro, noting that voters would have the last word in the voting process.

Scolfaro said building a transfer station or contracting with haulers would cost the town about the same price, in the vicinity of $350,000, based on operations, tipping fees of about $150 a ton and monthly hauling fees that currently may be as low as $5 a month for those with limited trash and limited incomes, to $20 a months for weekly pickup.

"I have a problem," said Robert Logsdon of Columbia

Lee Dump, A11

Photo by Thelma O'Brien

Lee dump closes permanently December 1.

Street, "with haulers coming in. A lot of people get hurt, really hard...tenants on fixed incomes...people who get laid off...single parents." He favors a town transfer station and a system whereby users would buy stickers and affix them to trash bags, thus offering graduated fees.

Louis Failla of Fairview Street, who speaks eloquently of this most modern of dilemmas ("From antiquity to the present time we've had a place to put our trash," he begins) says "it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure" which option is preferable as far as cost goes, if the tax rate is upped by a dollar.

If his house is worth $80 and he has a choice of paying either $80 a year or $20 a month to get rid of his garbage, the ordinary Joe wouldn't have a hard time making up his mind.

"I'm very afraid of going to private haulers," said Failla, who was concerned that fees might increase at the whim of the trucker. He wants more than two haulers to come forth with proposals.

"What protection are we going to have against price rises from haulers," he asked

Daley & Sons, who has worked in the town for 20-plus years, and Lenox Trucking, a newer participant who has been hauling for some time in Lenox, have come forward with proposals for the period between December 1 and whenever a permanent solution is implemented.

Nelson Daley suggested the town might want to use his private transfer station at the landfill for two weeks to find out how that works and how much it would cost. That suggestion was duly noted.

Caroline Young, secretary of the recycling committee, asked, "Why is it so cosmically important how we're going to pay for this...?" She pointed out that how ever it's paid for, residents would be paying and it didn't make a whole lot of difference.

Mark Thorne of Pleasant Street, noting the success of the year-old recycling efforts in town, asked if there couldn't "be more aggressive composting with actual 'garbage' garbage?" He thought dumping costs might be reduced if actual "garbage garbage" could be composted.

Selectmen Martin Deely, who attended the meeting with his fellow board members, said in no uncertain terms that the town didn't want to be in the transfer station or hauling business, although hauling was better than transfer operations as far as the town business was concerned.

"We don't want the headaches. The only option is town contracting (with haulers)," Deely asserted.

Keeping a step ahead of the recession

Lee Lime Co. adjusting to changing market

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

11-4-91

LEE — At Lee Lime Co.'s dusty, ear-splitting plant off Marble Street, the Deely family's business of crushing marble into limestone has taken twists and shifts to survive in a changing market and, now, an economy weakened by recession.

"The only way to stay ahead of the game is to try to be creative ... and to innovate all the time, or the world will march right past us," said Martin H. Deely, 58, in an interview at the plant, which is dwarfed by its massive quarry.

For the 113-year-old company and the great-grandson of its founder, innovating means getting the limestone products into the hands of the backyard gardener for use as plant food, landscaping and decorative marble chips.

A hundred years ago, things were quite different. Success primarily meant selling quicklime to the booming paper industry for use as a caustic agent in paper production, says Deely.

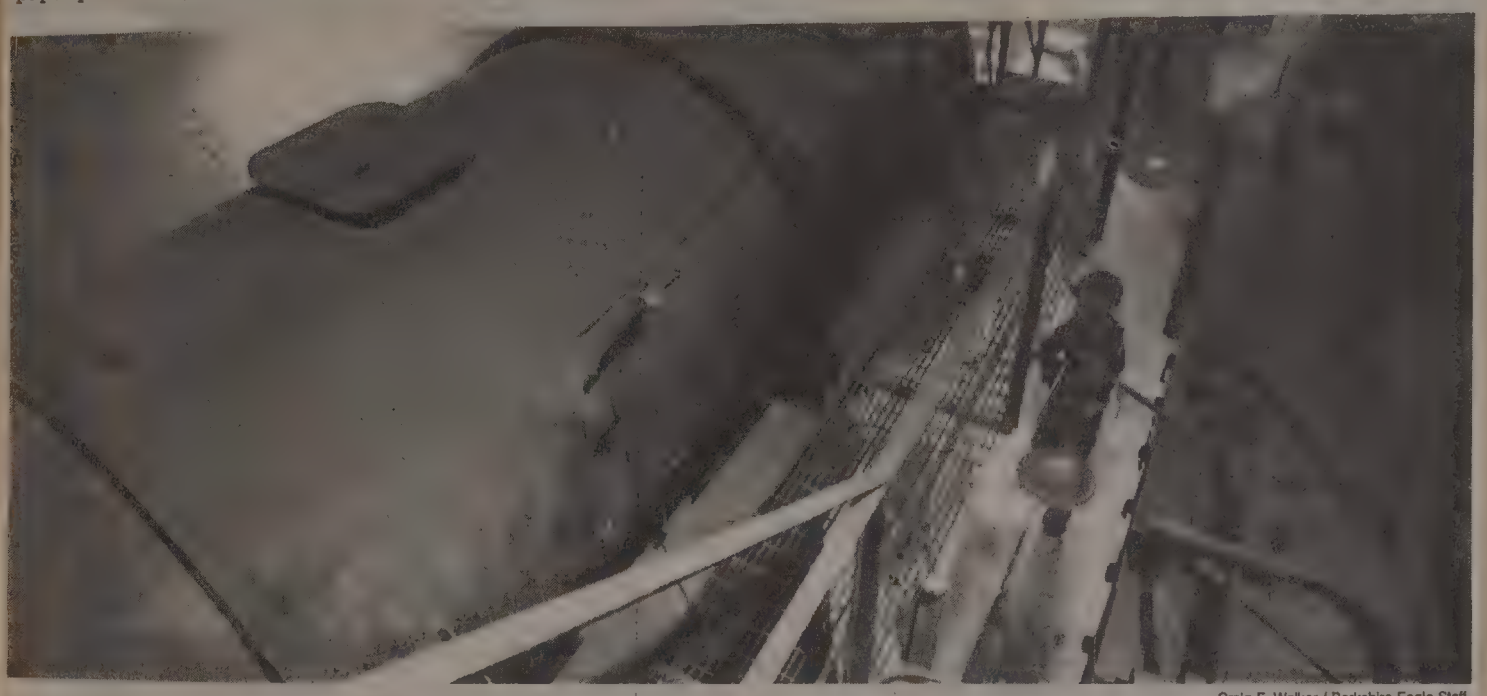
Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee Lime Co. owner Martin H. Deely says being creative is 'the only way to stay ahead of the game.'

Since then, the paper industry has changed. Paper technology no longer requires quicklime, and the industry has dwindled, so many of the 30 or so lime quarries that dotted the landscape between Vermont and Connecticut closed. For them, the world marched past.

Lee Lime and other limestone businesses, however, got into the construction and agriculture markets. Quicklime, lightweight and impervious to water after high-temperature cooking, became — and still is — a key ingredient in mortar. Rich in calcium and magnesium, limestone also became widely used to neutralize farmers' soil.

LEE LIME, continued on B3



Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Giant vertical kiln at Lee Lime Co. heats to 1,700 degrees to make quicklime at the Marble Street plant.

Lee Lime Co. holds its ground amid recession

■ **LEE LIME, from B1**

By the 1960s, those two markets accounted for about 75 percent of his company's business, Deely said.

Compounded problems

But the slow decline of agriculture and big construction projects, compounded by the recession, has shrunk those mainstay markets to between 40 percent and 50 percent of sales, he said.

Thus, the recent push in backyard gardening products, which now account for about 30 percent of his business, he said. Another 20 percent of sales come from Handi-mix, a line of pre-mixed do-it-yourself home repair products.

Deely said Lee Lime took in approximately $8 million in gross sales in 1988 and 1989, but last year sales were around $7 million — a drop he attributes to the recession. There are no jobs for the taking at the 60-employee plant right now, he said. Still, there have been no layoffs; only a cutback in overtime work for employees.

The gardening and do-it-yourself products are not as glamorous as the mortar business once was. Lee Lime's quicklime was used in the construction of the Empire State Building, Chrysler Building and the Bronx County Courthouse in New York City and, in Albany, N.Y., Rockefeller Plaza and the post office. Lee lime was also used in buildings constructed for the 1939 World's Fair and Boston's Prudential Center.

And when the company was in the business of cut limestone, its gleaming marble was used in the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. But in the 1920s and 1930s, Deely said, his grandfather got out of the cut limestone business because of the high cost of marble and shipping.

Still, the Lee plant is operating 24 hours a day, bringing at least 500 tons of day from the quarry to the plant on the ledge above, said union president Gordon N. Thomson. Workers at the plant are members of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers.

Thomson said the company is good to its workers and doesn't lay off employees in hard times. Still, those who retire or quit aren't replaced.

"We're just hopeful things will pick up," he said.

In addition to the recession, automation of many job functions has cut the work force.

'Sad but true'

Deely noted that at one time there were as many as 60 men working in the quarry alone; now there are only a handful operating giant payloaders and a crusher that chips the marble rocks into small stones.

"It's sad but true," he said. "As we automate more and more, we just don't replace people when they retire."

In the quarry, the stones are piled neatly alongside each other like small mountains. Heavy trucks haul the stones up the hill to the plant, a gray, no-frills building that has been redone and recycled as technology required. The stones are dropped onto a conveyer belt that feeds them into a giant automated mortar and pestle.

Small stones are separated from larger ones. Some are cooked in a giant coal-burning kiln that heats to 1,700 degrees to make quicklime.

Other marble is polished into shiny stones, or even ground to the consistency of confectioner's sugar. At the end of the plant is an automated packaging process that once required six people; automation means the same work requires only two people.

A cloud of dust hangs in the air, and a powdery white residue covers every surface, giving the plant a surreal quality. The sound of the machinery is deafening. Yet the noise and magnitude of the plant are deceptive.

In the grand scheme of limestone operations, Deely said, "We're a peanut. There are company's that get out more in a month than we do in a year."

Eagle

The man-made lake that leaked

One repair effort has been scuttled; 2nd in wings

By Daniel O. Bellow
Berkshire Eagle Staff

WASHINGTON — Up at the end of a very rough dirt road in the wooded vastness of the Washington Mountain watershed is a lake that contains no water despite the hundreds of thousands of dollars of state and federal money that have been poured into it.

Not only does the lake leak, but one attempt at fixing it has been aborted. No one seems sure how long it will take to fix it and what it will cost.

Washington Mountain Lake was designed as a recreational lake and flood control project to protect Lee and its valley from floods like the disastrous one that killed two people in 1968, when the Mud Pond dam broke. It will not supply drinking water. Neighboring Schoolhouse and October Mountain reservoirs will supply Lee and Lenox with water and double as flood control projects.

The earthen dam was completed in 1975 by Petricca Industries of Pittsfield at a cost of $351,572, using materials from the site. The lake could not be filled until the long-distance telephone cable that stretched across its upper end was replaced.

Once filled, the 225-acre lake promptly began to leak, so in 1986 it was drained. Studies revealed that cracks in the bedrock underneath the dam were letting the water through.

Robert and Basil "Rick" Petricca said their company built the dam according to the specifications and under the supervision of engineers of the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The engineers told them where to put the dam, and any seismic studies would have been the agency's responsibility.

"You assume they've done their homework," Rick Petricca said.

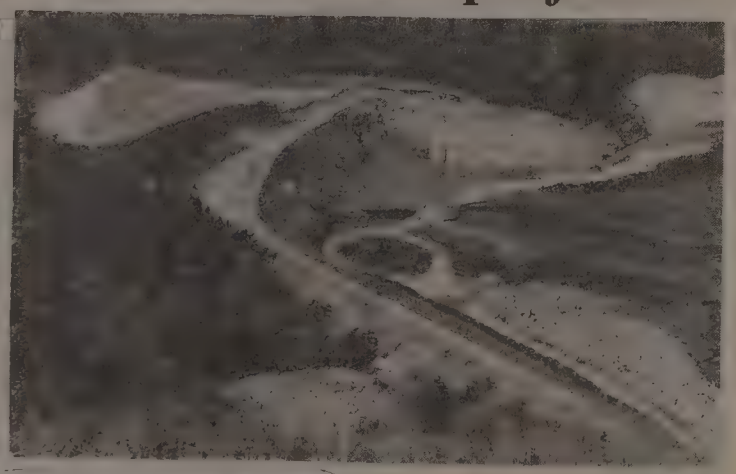
"Sometimes you can spot an [engineer's] error, but this isn't the kind you can spot right off," he said. "It's hard to spot cracks in the bedrock. When you drill and blast, all you're looking at is broken rock face, and unless the cracks are so huge, you'll miss them."

The contract for dam repairs was awarded to Sciaba Construction, a Boston firm. In the course of excavations, Sciaba discovered still more problems, including

WATERSHED, continued on B5

Photos by Craig F. Walker

Washington Mountain Brook project



View, above, of the Washington Mountain Brook project, looking northwest. Unfinished Washington Mountain Lake and dam are outlined in white. Area in box, above, is pictured at right. It shows the unfinished curved dam, excavation debris and dry lake bed. Perspective distortion in photo above makes Washington Mountain Lake look smaller than the other lakes. It is actually about the size of the others combined.

flaws in the bedrock on the north end of the dam. Those cracks would have cost more to fix than the company was being paid, so the contract was terminated by mutual consent after $201,136 of the $926,325 allotted had been spent.

The Soil Conservation Service has decided that a new design is necessary, but whether the dam will be moved to a location over sound bedrock or the cracked bedrock will be fixed is yet to be determined. "Anything can be fixed," said Rick Petricca. "The question is how much money will it take to fix it."

The agency has awarded a $96,369 contract to Petricca to stabilize the site for the winter and "do some investigative work to provide us with more data so we can complete the design," said Richard Standish of the Soil Conservation Service.

Once the new design is complete, the job will be put out to bid again, said Thomas Clark of the Division of Water Resources. He could offer no estimate of the time required to complete the dam and refill the lake, but he made clear that the state and federal governments are not going to let the lake sit dry forever. They intend to see the project through to completion.

The new plan will also include replication of wetlands drowned when Schoolhouse Lake was flooded as a new water supply for Lee and Lenox. The state had spent $45,917 and the towns $5,734 on wetlands replication and construction of an access road as of Sept. 15.

As for the total cost of the project over 30 years of design and execution, Standish said he could not begin to estimate how much money has been spent on this project by federal, state and local authorities since it was conceived.

20

Project leaves Lee, Lenox in a quandary

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Millions of dollars and dozens of years after the Washington Mountain Brook water project was implemented for the towns of Lee and Lenox, the communities face the prospect of spending millions more to get the job done, and some officials aren't in any hurry to complete it.

Lee and Lenox officials have agreed to discuss trimming the final completion costs by sharing a water treatment plant. Original plans called for separate plants, with price tags of $2 million to $3 million each, sources say.

But because neither town has experienced in recent years the water crises that prompted the joint venture, motivation appears to have waned. In fact, there was talk in Lenox during the last year of suspending work, which was begun in the 1960s and picked up momentum in the mid-1980s.

So what's the status of the 20-year-old project that could end up costing the state, federal and local governments around $10 million?

"No one's really been paying much attention to it," said Lee Selectman Martin H. Deely. "No one wants to spend the money."

Still, he said, Lee will "probably" finish the job and would do well to share a treatment plant if possible.

"Lee sees a good and available water supply," he said, noting that accommodating development in town will require the assurance of plentiful water.

Lenox Selectman George L. Darey, a longtime advocate of the three-lake Washington Mountain Brook project, said that for a number of reasons Lenox's part of the project is not the priority it once was — despite the $4 million or so the town has spent to increase its water supply.

Lenox has improved its existing water system with repairs to pipeline leaks, its population has declined in recent years and it has been able to buy water from Pittsfield during the peak summer tourist season, Darey said.

Still, he would like to see the effort come to fruition after years of water shortages, buying from neighboring towns and drawing water from Stockbridge Bowl. Like Deely, he believes Lee and Lenox should share a water treatment plant.

'We owe it to the people'

Lenox Selectman John J. Pignatelli agrees.

"We owe it to the people in both towns to

STEPS, continued on B5

What are the next Washington Mt. steps for Lee, Lenox?

■ **STEPS, from A1**

talk about it," said Pignatelli, who is concerned about a water rate hike that will come with completion. "It could be an ideal regional solution for the two towns."

Lee and Lenox officials will meet in Lee on Nov. 18 to discuss sharing a treatment tank. There are a number of engineering questions that would have to be addressed, such as where to build the tank. If the plant were placed near Lee's Upper Reservoir, a booster pump would be needed to get the water over a hill and into the Lenox treatment tank.

Three-lake project

The Washington Mountain Brook project involved creating three lakes by constructing dams in October Mountain State Forest. Washington Mountain Lake, completed in 1973 and paid for with federal and state money, is a 224-acre lake intended to provide flood control and recreation, but it has been emptied for repairs.

October Mountain Lake, also state and federally funded, and Schoolhouse Lake — built with a combination of town and federal money — will provide a total of 2.45 million gallons of water per day to the two towns.

When ground was broken for the last dam at Schoolhouse Lake in 1986, the total estimated cost was about $2.5 million, with Lee and Lenox paying about $1.34 million and the state the remainder. However, the promise of state reimbursement has since vanished with state budget problems, sources said.

Lee and Lenox have shared the costs of Schoolhouse Lake and common pipelines, but each town was to build its own water tanks and filtration plants. Lenox has constructed its own water tank; Lee has not yet done so.

A 1985 town meeting appropriated almost $6 million for Lenox's share of the water project, pipelines, easements, water testing, pilot treatment plants and a new treatment plant at the town's older reservoirs.

Lenox's engineer, William Bradbury of Mass Municipal Engineering Consultants, said about $4 million of that appropriation has been spent.

The costs associated with building a water filtration plant for Lenox could be as high as $3.5 million, far beyond the $6 million limit, said Bradbury. The cost would include several years of water monitoring, pilot testing, designing and constructing a permanent plant.

He said his understanding is that Lenox's water treatment facility for Washington Mountain Brook is on hold, since costs have escalated above the original estimates and the two towns are now talking about sharing a plant. Sharing would indeed be cheaper, he said.

"The town wants to take a step back and reassess the whole project," said Bradbury.

David M. Lenart of Tighe & Bond, the engineering firm handling Lee's share of the project, said that he recalls earlier discussions about sharing a treatment plant but that neither town "got serious about it."

Lee has spent about $2.5 million constructing the Schoolhouse Lake dam and main transmission pipeline, some of which has been reimbursed by Lenox, according to J. Peter Scolforo, superintendent of public works. Lee has obtained town funds for the project on a step-by-step basis and has not yet sought funding for the final phase: water filtration. That phase, which could cost as much as $3 million, would require the approval of a town meeting, he said.

But without water crises pressing the towns into action, do they have the will to finish the job?

Lee doesn't have much choice. It is subject to a federal order requiring installation of a water treatment plant for the Upper Reservoir, which now supplies the town with water. That water is untreated, except for chlorination, but new federal law requires that the water be treated by 1996. It would make sense then, to build a plant that would treat both supplies — if they can be treated simultaneously.

Lenox, however, already treats its water, so completion would merely express the town's interest in being self-sufficient.

"With all the money we've put into it, we can't give it up," said G. Richard Phillips, chairman of the Lenox Department of Public Works.

But Pignatelli does not share Phillips' opinion.

"I think a lot will depend on our discussion with Lee," said Pignatelli.

With Lenox's population down from 6,400 10 years ago to around 5,200 now, and with water from Pittsfield available in emergencies, he said, "We may be able to wait."

The Berkshire Eagle, Monday, November 4, 1991 — B3

Statehouse committee will meet tomorrow on Lee amendment

LEE — The Legislature's Joint Committee on Local Affairs will hold a public hearing tomorrow on the proposed amendment to the state law outlining Lee's town administrator form of government, according to State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee., who is House chairman of the committee.

The bill, co-sponsored by State Sen. Jane Swift, R-North Adams, proposes an amendment to Chapter 471 of the Acts of 1991, which establishes a selectmen/town administrator form of government.

The amendment will make the positions of town clerk, town treasurer, town collector and the members of the board of assessors appointed rather than elected, as was mandated when the bill was passed last year.

The hearing will be held at 11 a.m. in Room 136 of the Massachusetts State House. After the hearing, the committee will hold an executive session to make a ruling on the bill.

A second bill to be discussed at the hearing will be a measure that would give Lee officials the authority to dissolve the town's insurance trust fund. This bill, House Bill No. 6228, will transfer the funds remaining in the insurance trust fund to the available funds account in the town treasury.

The Advocate Nov. 6, 1991

Lee Oil cited for hazardous waste site on Maple Street

Almost a year after first investigating contamination at the Lee Oil Co.'s Maple Street property, the state Department of Environmental Protection has determined that the property is a hazardous-waste site.

The state agency notified the selectmen of its finding in a letter this week. William Miller, owner of the company, has been directed to conduct a preliminary assessment of the contamination and then resolve whatever problems are uncovered.

Tally-Ho moves to Lee

Advocate 11-6-91

Robert Morrell, president of the Lenox Chamber of Commerce last year, has moved his business Tally-Ho Tack Shop to Route 102 in Lenox. Morrell says he needs to make the move to get more space for his expanding horse tack store which also sells food for pets.

Morrell was succeeded as chamber president this year by Francis G. Newton after a tempestuous one-year term. He was outspoken in his desires to see Lenox businesses do more for the Berkshire economy, but was criticized by some Lenox merchants for speaking on issues without always getting a consensus from chamber members first.

Lee officials warned to hold line on budget

By Ellen G. Lahr 11-5-91
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The chairman of the Finance Committee went before town officials, department heads and employees last night to explain a new way for them to figure out how much money they can't spend next year.

"Let's make this quick. I want to get home and see the [New York] Giants," said John E. DeVarennes, as he set off into an efficient overview of how and why the town must hold the fiscal 1993 budget in check.

The budget simply must be sent to the annual town meeting within the tax cap limits of Proposition 2½, he said, because an override is out of the question. Last spring voters resoundingly rejected such a measure by a 3-1 margin, so each department must find ways to trim its needs to reflect an even tighter fiscal belt, he said.

"There will be a slight revolution if we try to exempt things from the [tax] cap," DeVarennes said, standing before a chart showing examples of how next year's budgets will be figured. "The people have spoken firmly on that."

Each town department head will be required to fill out a six-column form outlining his proposed budget for fiscal year 1993.

The form compares 1993's requests with the expenditures of fiscal 1992 and 1991. It is intended to make it easier for department heads to figure projected expenses and their relation to the tax cap, while making allowances for anticipated increases in fixed costs such as health insurance, DeVarennes explained.

He told the approximately 30 employees gathered in the former district courtroom that the limits of Proposition 2½ will allow for a meager $205,000 increase in the town budget for fiscal 1993.

Predictable budget hikes will eat up approximately $171,000 of the allowable increase. Such costs include health insurance, Medicare taxes, workers' compensation and retirement contributions. The town's contribution to workers' compensation may rise by 45 percent in fiscal 1993, while health insurance will likely rise by 10 percent, DeVarennes said. And figured into the expected increase is a 3 percent wage raise for town employees, he added.

With so much money already spoken for, only $34,000 remains for contingent increases, assuming revenue remains stable.

In May, town meeting representatives approved a $255,000 override of Proposition 2½, but voters defeated the measure at the polls.

It was not until September that a special town meeting was able to adjust the budget accordingly, with a combination of voluntary cuts by town departments, postponement of capital projects, borrowing, transfers and use of free cash.

Lee Selectmen, FinCom hold the line on fiscal 1993 budgets

Advocate 11-6-91

Hoping to bring some order and constraints to the town's budgetary process, Lee Finance Committee Chairman John DeVarennes laid down the line Monday that Lee town budgets will have to be "lean and mean" next year.

DeVarennes estimates the town's Proposition 2 1/2 levy limit will increase next year by between $205,000 and $250,000. At the same time, however, automatic increases in expenses, such as insurance and salary contracts, will be $170,000. The result will be that town departments will have to justify all expenses and should not expect to receive large increases in allocations.

"We're only asking you for a budget that meets the parameters of Proposition 2 1/2," DeVarennes said to about 30 town officers. "There's no place to go in fiscal 1993. If you cannot explain and justify an expense, it will be cut out."

Advocate 11-6-91

walkabout

By
Deidre Consolati

AN EARLY PHOTO OF LEE instantly reveals the sparsity of its population and buildings and the notable pieces of open land in between. Houses, stores and mills formed a cluster only in the town's center or in other rural enclaves, such as East or South Lee.

According to townspeople who came of age in the 1920s, Lee's landscape and the agrarian focus of the community began to change after World War II, as other towns did similarly throughout the county and nation. The postwar population in Lee soared, and tract housing began. Former farms such as Highfield on the southern ridge of Fairview Street, famous for the milk production of a cow called Highfield Colantha Mooie (whose monument is still intact on the top of the hill) evolved into housing lots that eventually reached to South Lee. On upper Laurel Street, McEnanny's farm and stables -- where riding horses grazed on the site of the present-day Laurel Hill Motel -- became the location of a housing development known as Theresa Terrace, where lots extended west to the borders of Highlawn Farm.

In the 45 years after World War II, Lee saw the proliferation of not only large housing tracts, but trailer courts, motels and apartment complexes such as Lexington Manor, Garfield Apartments and Holly House; supermarkets, convenience stores, full-service restaurants and fast-food enterprises, such as Burger King, Pizza Hut and Red Apple Chinese food; the expansion of local industries, such as Kimberly-Clark; land-taking for cemeteries and public-utility projects; and finally, the most intensive project to affect the town ever: the construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike with its attendant interchange, arteries, gas stations and restaurant cutting a wide swath through southwestern Lee.

Commented the East Center Street resident: "We have no land left. It's all used up!"

Small wonder then, that the idea of converting one of the last remaining parcels of farmland close to the heart of town into a municipal golf course, came across as questionable (and alarming) when broached at a selectmen's meeting recently.

The conversion of the pastureland on Stockbridge Road is being proposed by Lee native and golfing professional, John Wells. The property is owned by Realtor Isadore Goodman and extends over a hill facing south, with a splendid vista of nearby Beartown Mountain and other distant hills.

The rationale that a golf course preserves the diversity of open space does not hold water, nor in this case a meadow with its rich variety of plant and animal life is being replaced with a monoculture of cropped grass, severely limiting the number and type of living creatures able to subsist in that reduced habitat.

Quite naturally, the managers of Lee's present golf course, Greenock, feel that one set of greens in town is more than sufficient. But what looms larger is the question of what is the best use for this pastureland, one of the last remaining.

The mandate from Lee people for preserving the town's dwindling open lands is a strong one: in a 1986 planning board study to decide the future of open space in Lee, the *MAJORITY* of Lee residents stated that the preservation of existing open lands in the town was their No. 1 priority.

Finally, to other Lee residents concerned about that catch phrase called "quality of life," it looms as preposterous that in a town with a "Community Development Corporation" based on attracting industry, the idea of a counterbalancing trust dedicated to maintaining precious open space has never been given a thought.

It's time for Lee to catch up with the times and join the other towns in the countywide land trust that has been around for years. In conjunction -- and happily the selectmen are investigating this possibility at the present -- the broader concept of a Berkshire County land-use commission needs to be developed, with sweeping powers to veto unwelcome business schemes and regulate industry, as is now in existence on much-threatend Cape Cod.

VIGNETTE: Bare boughs scrape the pale November sky and the frost-blasted garden lays in ruins. Seedheads of Queen Anne's Lace are brittle and dried, and turn inward in defeat. Jewelweed plants are brown, and everywhere lay the vanquished shriveled leaves, their sole remaining purpose to nourish next year's life.

After summer's soft blue days we need to adjust to this cooler reality. It's time to toughen our hides and trot out the yearly argument: winter is a beautiful season and we'll get through the cold -- we always do.

Wishing you the expanding resilience to get you ready for the experience of winter, and peace with your neighbor.

School regionalization Advocate 11-6-91

Lee to keep looking for partner

Undeterred by three towns' reluctance to discuss forming a new regional school district, Lee School Superintendent Henry Zukowski says he will seek other communities to discuss merging school systems.

School officials from Lenox, Otis and Sandisfield agreed to discuss ways to share some services with the Lee school system last month, but declined to enter into merger talks.

"Lee will continue to explore ways to do a merger with other districts," Zukowski says. "I'm overboard on regionalization."

Zukowski says he does not have a specific plan in mind but he has begun to speak with Berkshire Hills School Superintendent George Lane and Southern Berkshire School Superintendent Thomas Consolati about the possibilities.

"I've got to keep looking because I'm afraid of what the future holds," Zukowski says. "If we're going to keep budgets the same every year, that means we're going to have to lose something every year. The cost of everything is going up, so that means you have to give something up. That means there will be less for the students."

Zukowski adds that the programs that are usually dropped during budget-cutting sessions are the ones designed for underachieving students who need motivation. A freshman orientation program started this year to help initiate new high school students is already in danger of being discontinued next year because of budget issues

Zukowski and the Lee School Committee's quest to find a partner for a regional school district marks a new outlook for the school system which traditionally has preferred to have an independent and self-reliant school system.

School officials, however, say they can no longer afford that luxury. At a meeting last month with school officials from Lenox, Tyringham, Sandisfield and Otis, Lee School Committee members and administrators said that times have changed since 10 years ago when the Lee School Committee would not even consider a merger with Lenox.

Lee school officials say they are now extremely concerned about the financial implications of going it alone and would like to broaden the geographic and academic options for Lee students. Lee High School Dean of Students Kathleen Bort said she was concerned that students are becoming more and more insulated in Lee, unaware of what else there is in the rest of the Berkshires.

School Committee member Carol LeProvost said she was "duty-bound" to continue attending meetings concerning regionalization, even she was the only person interested in the subject.

No specific plan is in the makings for a merger, Zukowski says, but several options are being explored in addition to the Lenox proposal. With the departure of Otis from the Lee School Union, Zukowski says the first step may be to form a regional school district with Tyringham. Tyringham is now a member of the Lee School Union.

Berkshire Hills School Superintendent George Lane confirms that Zukowski has spoken with him about a merger,. He plans to notify the tri-town district's school committee about Zukowski's inquiry. "We haven't pursued any negotiations with anybody, but I will inform the school committee that Lee would like to do so," Lane says.

Southern Berkshire School Superintendent Thomas Consolati was on vacation and could not be reached for vacation.

A long-term possibility, Zukowski says is to form a super-district throughout Berkshire County in which different "magnet schools" are organized.

"Let's not have all these ticky-tack schools trying to be all things to everybody but with too little resources. Let's have each school have its own concept with something that can attract students who are interested in it. That's what we need," Zukowski says.

ECH Will postpones move in tough times

Faced with a severe drop in business, ECH Will Manufacturing Co. in Lee has postponed indefinitely its plans to relocate its business to a new building in the Berkshires.

Vice president John Eisenhour says orders for the company, which manufactures paper-making machines and sheeters, have declined as part of an industry-wide slump.

Despite rumors that the company will move to Wisconsin, where ECH Will has a sister company, Eisenhour says the company will remain in the Berkshires.

"We have no plans for relocation outside of Berkshire County," Eisenhour says. "There have been rumors of all sorts and those are not alternatives that are being considered. Quite honestly, it's a little aggravating that you have to deal with these rumors. There's enough frustration dealing with just the market."

Eisenhour says the company has had a series of layoffs, trimming the size of the work force to between 70 and 80 people until more orders arrive.

ECH Will announced plans more than two years ago to leave its present site off Route 23 for a new site and building. The company's lease for the property terminates at the end of next year.

But rather than go through the expense and trouble of a move, Eisenhour says the company has decided to hunker down at its present facility. He says the company will be able to extend its lease.

"In this business climate, it is not a time when you spend a lot of time on relocation," Eisenhour says. "We feel we do not have an absolute need to relocate." He adds that the problem with a lack of orders does not appear to have to do with the quality or cost of ECH Will's work, but rather the fact that companies are not ordering machines from anybody.

ECH Will's desire to relocate prompted Lee town officials to scramble to develop an industrial park for the manufacturer. The Lee Community Development Corp. has been working to develop a property off Route 102 for commercial development.

Also, the Lee Planning Board has almost completed its work for a new bylaw that would allow for the development of an industrial park. The bylaw may be voted on by town representatives next year.

Lee almost ready to hire administrator -- at last

Advocate 11-6-91

Paving the way for the hiring of a Lee town administrator, state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, said Tuesday that an amendment to previous legislation for the Lee town government was approved by the state Local Affairs Committee.

The amendment was voted on by Lee representatives in September to make five positions in town government appointed instead of elected. The positions are town clerk, treasurer, tax collector, the Board of Assessors and the Board of Health.

With the committee's okay, the legislation is expected to be approved by the state Legislature within a week, Hodgkins says. Hodgkins, who is chairman of the Local Affairs Committee, amended the original legislation in Boston several months ago because he wanted to preserve the positions as elected ones until the town considered the idea more thoroughly.

Lee Selectmen say they are now ready to seek and hire a town administrator to oversee the daily operation of town government. Selectman say they will appoint a search committee to find candidates and have asked Mead president David Kalusmeyer to be on the committee.

Selectmen say they are hoping to get more than 100 applications and they will look for somebody with experience and a pleasant personality.

"We need to get somebody whose going to be able to get everyone to work together," Selectmen Chairman Diane Roosa said. "That's going to be a real chore."

Lethal Innocence to be broadcast Nov. 13

Lethal Innocence, the American Masterpiece movie filmed in Lee and other southern Berkshire towns, will be shown on public television Nov. 13 from 8 to 9:30 p.m., according to television schedule for this month.

Film crews descended into Lee last spring to film the movie about a New England community coming to the aid of Cambodian refugees. The film crew used locations throughout Lee and south county, used local residents as extras and generated a great deal of excitement in the community.

Advocate 11-6-91

Eagle 11-6-91

Legislative committee OK's Lee administrator

LEE -- The Legislature's Joint Committee on Public Affairs yesterday voted unanimously to approve an amendment that will allow Lee to establish a Selectmen/administrator form of town government, state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, said yesterday.

Hodgkins, chairman of the committee, said the amendment must now be approved by the House of Representatives and then by the Senate. He said he did not anticipate any roadblocks to passage.

Lee will adopt a town administrator form of government as of January. The amended legislation will allow certain town officials' positions to be appointed rather than elected, as the statute originally was written. Appointive positions include town clerk, treasurer, collector and board of assessors.

Advocate 11-6-91

Lee considers starting land trust to preserve open space

Hoping to begin preservation of some of the most scenic sights in Lee, the Lee Selectmen Monday asked residents Timothy Gray and Deidre Consolati to serve on the Berkshire County Land Trust and to look into starting a land trust for Lee.

Although towns do not typically initiate land trusts, the Lee Selectmen say the town needs to set up an organization to help preserve Lee's landscape. Rather than wait for a grass-roots effort to develop, board members say they want to give the town a gentle push toward doing it.

"It's an idea whose time should have come by now," says Selectman Martin Deely. "Land trusts have been extremely successful in other towns. I wish someone would start one in Lee. It can't just come from a governmental nudge; it's got to come from a group of people."

As a first step, the selectmen suggested Consolati -- who is a columnist for THE SOUTH ADVOCATE -- arrange an informational meeting for Lee residents by asking members of the Stockbridge Land Trust to explain how their organization works.

Land trusts are non-profit organizations that work toward preserving open space by either acquiring land, or development rights on land through gifts, purchases or easements. Many land trusts also offer consulting services to large landholders by informing them of tax incentives and estate-planning methods to make the preservation of land less of a financial burden.

Surrounding towns that have land trusts include Stockbridge, Tyringham and Great Barrington.

"Lee is an interesting town with a lot of wonderful land," says George S. Wislocki, director of the Berkshire Natural Resources Council. "It is a town which has substantial interest in land preservation and a town in which I would like to see a land trust."

A planning study in Lee done four years ago recommended the town have a land trust but the recommendation was never pursued. With attractive tracts of land along Stockbridge Road, the Housatonic River, at High Lawn Farm, the Tyringham valley and other locations, however, the selectmen say now may be the time to consider a land trust again.

Wislocki, however, warns that a land trust should not be a governmental body. "A good land trust should be able to bite the town in the foot," Wislocki says.

He adds that a land trust should not be formed to stop a specific project, referring to Consolati's desire to try to prevent the construction of a golf course off Stockbridge Road.

The selectmen question whether a land trust would be financially feasible. If it requires money from town government, Selectman Joseph F. DuPont says he would oppose the creation of a land trust because of the town's financial constraints.

But Wislocki says a land trust should not be funded by the town and that so far the recession has not hampered land trusts either in Berkshire County or in the nation as a whole.

"This is not an uncomfortable time to start a land trust," Wislocki says. "There's no evidence that the recession has affected land trusts in Berkshire County. What they're finding is that people are concerned about the environment and are acting locally to do something about it."

Wislocki adds that a successful land trust needs solid citizens with a firm grounding in reality to succeed, because of the amount of work involved.

Deely says the town would have a very capable person if Gray takes on the task. Gray was involved opposing the Tenneco cogeneration plant and discussions about preserving the Golden Hill Road Bridge. Gray says he is tentatively interested in the idea of a land trust.

"I'm certainly open to it," Gray says. "It would be a good thing for the town. We're one of the few towns in Berkshire County that doesn't have one. It's something that I think would take a few years to work toward. Up until now there hasn't been any participation, so right now it's only at the earliest stage of its infancy."

24

Lee Appears to Get Its Money's Worth From Town Counsel

(This is the second in a continuing series on town legal expenses.)

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—Glamour may not accrue to the municipal lawyer, and in the case of Jerome Scully, town counsel for Lee, neither do many municipal dollars.

But value for money seems to be what Lee is getting and Scully says that's all right with him. He may not earn a lot but neither does he contend with the prodigious clerical work of the higher-priced hourly attorneys.

Scully, Lee lawyer since 1980, earned an $11,000 salary this past fiscal year, plus $1,000 for expenses. Whatever work he does for the town, and he doesn't count the hours, comes out of that budget. Sometimes what comes out of his expense account even includes fees paid to other lawyers when it's inappropriate for Scully to act.

Great Barrington's lawyer Dennis Downing, for example, bills at $85 an hour, and that town's legal expenses, with a population of about 8,000, have averaged approximately $25,000 a year for the past four years.

Scully's retainer has inclined upwards slightly from $9,450 in 1988 to his current rate. His expense account is usually $1,000 but last year it was only $500. Lee's population hovers around 6,000.

When he's working on town cases in his Main Street offices, residents might find Scully preparing a complaint document against a Lee man who had resisted a selectmen's order to have his dangerous dog destroyed. Likewise, he might be scanning contract documents from the Century Berkshire Cable Corp.

Such engagements are the meat and potatoes of town counsel operations.

But, says Scully, echoing his colleague from Great Barrington, "Most of my time is consumed by zoning and code violations, on zoning board of appeals special permits, abatements, those sorts of things."

And when the town was still self-insured, which was through 1989, Scully acted for the town in employee grievance cases.

"There was a flurry of grievances there for awhile," he said, "DPW (department of public works) union problems."

One case related to subcontracting work for mowing town property, a move that was considered unwise by the department. The town's rationale was inspired by failing equipment, Scully said, and rather than spend the money to repair the mowers, subcontractors were hired.

The department claimed this meant its workers were not getting their due over-time pay and a grievance was filed. The upshot was that the town was told no more subcontracting on a regular basis. Only temporary helpers could be hired.

Two long and interesting cases took up a good chunk of Scully's time over the past few years.

Way back in 1986 Maurice and Callahan & Sons of Pittsfield applied to the state Outdoor Advertising Board for renewals on the sign they had operated since 1938 but had reapplied for only one other time. The signs are large and freestanding and face the turnpike and other major thoroughfares.

Lee's bylaws say signs must be limited in size and must be on premises. The town objected to the request and what followed was several years of further denials and appeals and accusations of illegal use and inharmonious use and use that detracted from the beauty of the Berkshires.

The town's position was upheld by the state but the company is still negotiating over compensation due to deprived users under federal highway beautification procedures.

A potentially more damaging case involved a $2 million lawsuit filed by The Center, operators of Fox Hollow Hotel Resort and Conference Center in Lenox against the towns of Lenox and Lee and Comalli, an electrical installation and repair company in Pittsfield.

In February 1987 a Fox Hollow building burnt down and the resort claimed faulty wire installation and inspection were the causes. At the time of construction in 1984-85, Lee's wiring inspector, by agreement, also worked for Lenox.

Scully, acting for the town, was successful in having the suit against Lee dismissed, claiming that there was no cause for action. Subsequent appeals were voluntarily withdrawn.

Such is the legal machinery of town government. Scully said mockingly that after this series of articles is finished he may just apply for a raise.

COMMUNITY NOTES

Lee High senior cited for academic honor

LEE — Lee High School senior Cathleen Cinella has been named the recipient of the superintendent's award for academic excellence.

Cinella, the daughter of Thomas and Diane Cinella of 176 Main St., has served as student council president and a member of the math team, the National Math League, the foreign language club, the National Honor Society, prom and yearbook committees.

She has actively participated on the basketball, softball and soccer teams and was named All-Berkshire in soccer, All-South in softball and All-Western in basketball. She was a member of the Division III State Championship girl's basketball team.

Cathleen Cinella

Cinella plans to major in pre-law in college.

Volunteers sought to gather signatures for cigarette tax

LEE — The Massachusetts Coalition for a Healthy Future is seeking volunteers to collect signatures and financial contributions for a statewide petition to attempt to keep cigarettes out of the hands of young people.

A total of 150,000 signatures must be obtained in order to place the question on the 1992 ballot.

The initiative petition, if approved by voters, would increase the price of cigarettes by 25 cents to make it more difficult for children to buy them.

The income generated by the additional tax would be used to fund programs, such as comprehensive health education in the state's public schools, that would teach children about the dangers of smoking and how to quit.

"The giant tobacco conglomerates are targeting our children with advertising that appeals to youth," said Richard Lindsay, coordinator of the Southern Berkshire chapter of the coalition.

"Because nicotine is addictive, kids who experiment with cigarettes now may well become hooked for life," said Lindsay. "In fact, 90 percent of today's adult smokers started before they were 19. A price increase is one of the most effective ways of keeping cigarettes away from children."

The coalition is led by the Massachusetts Division of the American Cancer Society, the Massachusetts Medical Society and Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Massachusetts.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer may contact Lindsay at 243-0869.

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee's A.J. Skowron leans over fallen Holyoke Catholic goaltender Joella McKay during yesterday's Western Mass. Division 2 semifinal game played at Lee. The host Wildcats came away with a 2-0 victory.

Lee, Greylock reach Div. 2 final

Wins assure girls' soccer champ from Berkshires

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff 11-6-91

Berkshire County is going to have another Western Mass. Division 2 girls' soccer champion. Whether it's Lee or defending champion Mount Greylock will be determined Saturday morning at 10 at the neutral Monument Mountain field when the teams meet to decide this year's Division 2 title.

Yesterday, top-seeded Lee ousted fifth-ranked Holyoke Catholic 2-0 at the Lee athletic field while third-seeded Greylock scored a 2-0 road win at second-seeded Monson.

This will be the fourth straight year a Berkshire County team has won the Western Mass. Division 2 title. Hoosac Valley started that string with a victory in 1988. Lee followed with a Division 2 title in 1989 while Greylock captured the crown last season. Greylock had gone to the finals in 1987 but was defeated by Holyoke Catholic.

"I look at this year's championship game two ways," Lee coach Sally Maish said. "Personally, I like to play a team that we haven't seen before. But it's good that a Berkshire County team is going to win the title. There should be a lot of fans and I'm expecting a great game."

"I think the teams are very much alike," Greylock coach Kim Chapman said. "We each stress skills instead of the physical style and we each have good passing teams."

Greylock and Lee have played some exciting soccer in their recent history. During last year's regular season the Wildcats pinned a 5-3 defeat on the

SOCCER, continued on C3

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

There was cause for celebration following Lee's 2-0 win over Holyoke Catholic in yesterday's Western Mass. Division 2 semifinals victory. From left are Sarah Blaisdell, Katie Cinella, A.J. Skowron, Sharon Heath and Kasey McManmon. Cinella and Blaisdell had the Wildcats' two scores.

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Holyoke Catholic goalie Joella McKay makes the save while Lee forward Kate Salinetti runs interference during yesterday's Western Mass. Division 2 semifinal game at Lee. The Wildcats won 2-0.

Lee, Greylock gain WM final

■ **SOCCER, from C1** 11-6-91

Mounties. But Greylock came back in last year's Western Mass. Division 2 semifinals and topped Lee 4-1 at the Wildcats' field. This year, the teams played to a 3-3 regular-season tie at Greylock on Sept. 20.

Lee 2, Holyoke Catholic 0

LEE — The Wildcats' defense was singed for five goals by Wahconah in the Berkshire County title game, which the Warriors won 5-2. That game apparently served as a wake-up call for the Lee defensive players, who have now helped to register two straight shutouts in Western Mass. tournament play.

Wildcats sweeper Jen Finnegan, in conjunction with fullbacks Carrie Angers and Kelsey Scarpa and halfback Sarah Blaisdell, keyed a smothering defensive effort that limited Holyoke to 11 shots at goalie Dina Souza, who made a handful of key saves early in the second half when the visitors turned the offense up a notch.

"We've picked up the intensity since the Wahconah game," Finnegan said. "This was also the last home game for the seniors on the team. Overall, I thought we worked together well."

"We wanted to make it to the [Western Mass.] finals," Scarpa added. "And we were looking to get the shutout. We kept our defensive line up field and hoped to catch them offsides."

The only goal Lee would need came about eight minutes into the first half when Katie Cinella converted a crossing pass from outer wing Sharon Heath. The Wildcats dominated the remainder of the opening stanza, forcing Holyoke goalie Joella McKay to come up with 10 saves in the first 40 minutes of play.

But it was the visitors who made an offensive push to start the second half of play. The toughest save Souza had to make during that stretch was a point-blank blast by Holyoke's Kelly Hurlburt from about 10 yards out.

But the Holyoke legs began to grow weary and with the Lee defense pressing toward midfield the Wildcats were able to turn the game around and force the action. A.J. Skowron had a chance to up the lead to 2-0, but her straight-on blast from 20 yards glanced off the crossbar.

Lee finally scored an insurance goal with about three minutes left when Blaisdell dribbled through three Holyoke defenders and shot high and to the right of McKay to give the Wildcats a 2-0 lead.

"We've had a couple of games this year where we haven't been ready for the second half, especially when the other team had the kickoff," Lee's Maish said. "But once we moved the ball across midfield we settled down."

Goals: Lee — Cinella, Blaisdell
Assists: Lee — Heath
Goalies: Lee — Souza, 9 saves. Holyoke Catholic — McKay 21 saves.

Courier 11-7-91

Card Club Plans Benefit Tag Sale

LEE — The Hot Corner Baseball Card Club, sponsored by the Lee Youth Association, will hold a baseball card tag sale Saturday, Nov. 16, from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Lee Community Center on Academy Street.

Admission will be free.

Club members will sell baseball, basketball, football and hockey cards as well as other sports collectibles and memorabilia. Proceeds will help pay the winter heating bill at the community center.

More information is available from Joe Furgal, Hot Corner Club adviser.

Lee '93 Budget Strategy Move: Hold The Line

Record 11-8-91

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—Finance Committee Chairman John DeVarennes told town officials and employees to tow the budget line next year or sink.

No way was the town going to pass an override, he said (last year's defeat of a Prop. 2 1/2 increase resulted in a solid 3-1 defeat), so budgets must be kept within a paltry tax cap increase of $205,000, $171,000 of which can already be accounted for by unalterable increased expenses in fixed items such as insurance, county retirement, utilities, Medicare, wages and utilities.

DeVarennes sounded his get tough policy at a Monday meeting called by selectmen to inform all town officials of the finance committee's new budget procedures for 1993.

The committee has devised a new form for budget computations, one that will require departments to list the previous year's requests, projections and actual expenditures.

He hopes a "realistic assessment" of the money situation will assist departments in producing tight budgets that have as little impact on services as possible.

He expects to distribute the forms soon and to receive them back for review as early as January 1992.

Of particular interest was a selectmen's informal "white paper" declaring a municipal salary increase of three percent. That figure is based on what the selectmen anticipate contract negotiations will yield, according to board member Martin Deely. The three percent figure can be exceeded or lowered and adjustments accordingly made, he noted in a later telephone interview.

DeVarennes said he wanted to make his presentation short so he could go home and watch the football game. He succeeded, and his 40-minute outline of the 1993 budget process drew only four responses from the audience.

School Superintendent Henry Zukowski wanted to know if the finance committee's rigid new rules wouldn't "usurp the rights of representatives" at town meeting to make determinations about what each department needed.

DeVarennes said no, the process was as flexible as ever, just more orderly.

Diedre Consolati, active in town land use matters, wanted to point out that times were tough and might get tougher and no allocations had been made to help the needy. "What emergency contingencies are there?" she asked. Deely said there was no instrument to allocate such funds except to senior citizens, veterans and for youth services.

Pipeline Abuttors Get Third Chance to Speak

Record 11-8-91

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—The conservation commission has extended public hearings on the proposed Tenneco pipeline expansion for the third time.

Those affected by the planned 35-foot permanent easement required for the new pipe can meet again November 25 at town hall with pipeline and town officials to air their concerns over land-taking and other actions relating to construction.

Commission Chairman Deborah Garry said the new pipe will be parallel to the existing 3 1/2-mile line that begins on the Lee-Stockbridge border and meanders through town to the Lee-Tyringham line.

At issue, besides the land acquisitions, is the 85-foot swath the gas company requires for construction.

Garry said she hoped to settle outstanding matters at the late November meeting so that plans may go before the necessary agencies.

The company wants to begin construction in the summer of 1992, she said, and finish within months.

Tenneco is the eastern subsidiary of the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, based in Houston, Texas. The pipe that travels through Lee begins, according to Garry, in Nassau, New York, and ends in Sandisfield.

Thirty-six abuttors to the pipeline have been identified, Garry said.

If You Like Bridges, Dams, Pipelines, Lee Town Hall Is the Place for You

Record 11-8-91

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE—If you're interested in bridges, there's something for you tonight at town hall; if you're interested in dams, pipelines and water supplies, try town hall Nov. 25.

Those in the Golden Hill Road neighborhood may wish to gain updated information on the proposed new bridge construction at a meeting of the Golden Hill Road Bridge Committee at 7 tonight in the courtroom.

An update on the Washington Mountain Brook water project is the subject of a joint Lee and Lenox selectmen's meeting November 25 in Lee.

Of concern in the bridge matter are environmental issues relating to construction and a state historical designation for the existing one-lane structure over the Housatonic River, says J. Peter Scolfaro, director of public works

Built in 1885, the Golden Hill Road 80-foot span came to the town's attention back in May 1985 when Scolfaro began to worry about the bridge's abutments and its weight capacity.

Since then the town has applied under the federal bridge replacement program for a newer and stronger structure.

"Right now the bridge only has a five-ton rating," Scolfaro says, "which is about the size of a light pickup. Oil trucks can't use it. To get to the street they have to go around on Laurel Street."

Although federally financed, the bridge nevertheless falls under some state sanctions, including the historical designation and its environmental impact.

A so-called 25 percent state design plan was presented at town hall last year "and not much has happened since," Scolfaro said.

The plan was to build a new bridge near the old one and then tear the old one down. Should the old bridge receive historical status, it will be left standing, Scolfaro said.

The new bridge, which will require a longer span, may also require a center pier in the river, a construction project that has environmentalists worried.

Scolfaro said the only cost estimate he's heard so far for the new bridge is $400,000.

Those interested in further information may attend tonight's town hall meeting.

The status of the multi-million dollar Washington Mountain Brook water and water treatment plant projects will be discussed November 25, when Lee and Lenox meet to compare notes and to plan how to pay for the next steps.

The Washington Mountain Brook project (in October Mountain State Forest), involving three man-made lakes, one for recreation and flood control and two for water supply, has been paid for by a combination of federal, state and local funds.

The water supply lakes, October Mountain and Schoolhouse, are supposed to provide 2.45 million gallons of water per day to Lee and Lenox.

The costs so far to Lee and Lenox have been $2.5 million for the Schoolhouse Lake dam and some pipeline, with Lee bearing a 51 percent burden. Costs for the other dams were paid for by state and federal allocations.

What is to follow, including water analysis, pipeline construction and treatment plant design, will cost considerably more, Scolfaro said, and it is those costs, as well as the incremental design steps, that will be on the agenda November 25.

All proposed expenses will need town meeting sanction.

Scolfaro said Lee's water rates, which average $100 a year, were raised three years ago to pay expenses related to dam and pipeline construction.

"They'll probably have to be raised again somewhere down the line," Scolfaro said.

Washington Mountain Lake, a recreation and flood control operation, remains empty after leaks were discovered in the earthen dam in the mid-1970s and the lake had to be drained.

Controversy over who is at fault for the apparent design flaws that caused the leaks continue among private contractors and government agencies responsible for the design.

Church's effort to buy Lee gallery hits snag

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff 11-8-91

LEE — A Pittsfield church's efforts to buy the Caropreso Galleries on High Street have encountered a snag, and the property is back on the market for $250,000.

But the Berkshire Bible Church has not abandoned its attempts to move to the auction gallery.

"The deal is not necessarily dead yet," said attorney Francis X. Spina, who represents the church.

If the property is not purchased, he said, it might be leased.

Despite the uncertainty of the purchase, the church has filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals an application for a variance that would revert the building to its original use as a church. And an agreement has been drafted between the School Department and the ministry to allow sharing of parking lots. Lee Central School is just two doors away from the gallery.

Louis Caropreso, who bought the building from the Methodist church in 1980 and turned it into an auction house, has moved his antique auction business to the Jenifer House complex on Route 7 in Great Barrington.

Berkshire Bible Church currently leases 5,700 square feet of space at St. Luke's Square on East Street, Pittsfield.

Spina said the sale has not taken place yet because of questions about the title to the structure, which dates back to the late 1800s when it was first owned by the Methodist church. Berkshire Bible Church is reluctant to make the purchase without a clear title, he said.

Anthony L. Caropreso, son of Louis Caropreso and the real estate agent handling the listing, questioned assertions about problems with the title.

"I don't think we'd have been able to buy it [in 1980] if there had been a problem with the title," said Caropreso, who owns MacCaro real estate.

He said he has recently shown the property to several interested buyers, including someone interested in operating a day care center there. The Lee Visiting Nurse Association also made an inquiry, he said.

Berkshire Bible Church signed a purchase and sale agreement with Caropreso on Aug. 19 and made a $2,000 deposit. The closing was to have taken place in October, but a 30-day extension was made to allow time to resolve the title question, the Rev. John Gardner, pastor, said Tuesday. That extension expired Tuesday.

Hearing slated Dec. 4

Attorney Jessie Doyle Deely of Lee, who is handling the zoning application, said the church needs a variance from town bylaws governing setbacks and parking requirements. The zoning board will hold a public hearing Dec. 4 in Town Hall.

The church has about 100 adult members and 120 children in its congregation, according to Gardner. Some of its members are former parishioners of The Bible Speaks, a fundamentalist ministry that operated in Lenox until losing its property following a lawsuit by a former member.

The Bible Speaks relocated to the Baltimore, Md., area, under the leadership of its pastor, Carl Stevens, and was re-established as the Greater Grace World Outreach Church.

Mead employees pay health plan surcharge

By Holly A. Taylor
Berkshire Eagle Staff 11-10-91

LEE — Employees at Mead Specialty Paper Division dropped their health maintenance organization coverage in large numbers this fall after the parent corporation attached surcharges of $700 to $2,800 to the price of the plans.

The surcharge, started a year ago, is discouraging HMO enrollment. Scott M. Hollander, manager of human resources at Mead in Lee, said of the 350 employees at Mead, 216 were in HMOs in 1991 and only 130 renewed their HMO memberships on Oct. 31.

Hollander said the HMOs don't save money for Mead because the company has its own self-insured plan. A self-insured plan means the company pays medical expenses for employees up to a certain amount and buys insurance for costs over that amount, usually $50,000.

What has happened, said Hollander, is that the older Mead employees are in the self-insured plan and that plan loses money, while the younger and healthier employees use the HMOs.

"Because more dollars are going to the HMOs, there are fewer dollars to pay for the expenses of the other health plan," Hollander said. "We understand the logic even though we don't like it and we're trying to change it."

Mead employees who chose Berkshire Health Plan will pay $7,624 for family coverage this year, although Berkshire charges Mead only $4,740. Under the Community Health Plan, employees pay $6,269 for family coverage, while the charge to the company is $4,650.

For individual coverage, Berkshire charges $1,823, while Mead employees pay $2,549, and Community charges $1,776, while Mead employees pay $2,596. All the figures were provided by Mead and the HMOs.

"This is a corporate policy," said Hollander. "As a division, we're not happy about it."

Steering employees

While many employers try to steer their employees into the least expensive health plan, several personnel and health insurance professionals called the Mead surcharge unusual.

An official at the state Division of Insurance said the surcharge concept is not illegal and appears to be a new trend among corporations that want to discourage enrollment in one health plan and encourage enrollment in another plan.

"There is no insurance law that deals with this issue," said Nancy C. Turnbull, deputy commissioner of the Division of Insurance.

Hollander said the corporation, based in Dayton, Ohio, will aggressively pursue managed-care programs in the future. He plans to serve on Mead's national task force, which will examine employee benefits in general.

Mead, which has 12,000 employees across the United States, gives its Lee employees roughly $6,000 each in "Mead dollars" with which to buy benefits such as health insurance, dental care, disability insurance and extra vacation time.

The incentives were in place to en-

MEAD, continued on B6

■ MEAD, from B1

plan, but they weren't working, Hollander said. An employee with $5,000 in Mead dollars would spend about $2,500 on a traditional plan with a $500 deductible for family coverage and then receive $2,500 in Mead dollars back in his or her paycheck.

If an employee chooses family coverage under Berkshire, for example, he or she would use all the "Mead dollars" and pay another $1,600 out of pocket for the coverage.

"I had to change my coverage," said one employee. "I couldn't afford it because I would have had to pay in $110 a month of my own money. My spouse checked out the HMO coverage through the Chamber of Commerce and it would have cost $1,600 less than buying it through Mead. It's pretty ridiculous."

'Quite frankly, it appears to be a trend.'

"Quite frankly, it appears to be a trend," said Clark Walter, a spokesman for Blue Cross Blue Shield, which owns Berkshire Health Plan. "More employers have cafeteria plans in which employees choose their benefits, and it's up to the employer to decide how to apportion the benefits."

Stephen Daylor, marketing agent for the Community Health Plan, said the surcharge is rare because many employers prefer HMOs and find them less expensive than conventional health plans.

"We haven't really seen this kind of surcharge activity," said Daylor. "I'm sure we'll probably lose some enrollment at Mead because of it."

Eagle 11-10-91

Honor society gets new Lee members

LEE — Lee High School inducted 11 new members into the National Honor Society at a recent ceremony.

New members from the senior class are: Samuel Fix, Mark Grady, Elena LaGrant, Felicia Piacentino, Michael Puntin, William Roche, Kelsey Scarpa and Karen Scheurer. Juniors Renee Cory, Shawn Gleason and Ralph Olds also were inducted.

Senior members of the honor society who were inducted last year are: Jodi Abderhalden, Rebecca Allen, Cathleen Cinella, Sheila Collins, Paul Consolati, Amanda Lahey, Betsy Loring, Travis Roberts, April Slater, Nadine Souza, Heather Stanard and Richard Wescott.

In addition, the honor society announced its newly elected officers. They are: Allen, president; Collins and Puntin, co-vice presidents; Stanard, secretary, and Scheurer, treasurer.

Lee honors 4 who died in Vietnam War

By Ellen G. Lahr 11-12-91
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Four young Lee men who died during the Vietnam War were honored this weekend when four new maple trees, recently planted outside Lee High School, were dedicated in their names.

A joint effort involving school alumni, the town, Greenock Country Club and Lee School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski, the Saturday afternoon ceremony drew about 40 relatives of the four men, members of VFW Post 893 and school officials.

Honored in the ceremony were Navy Lt. Bruce H. Stevenson, who died Aug. 17, 1967; Army Cpl. Michael C. Whalen, who died Feb. 28, 1969; Army Spec. 4th Class Charles H. Cummings, who died March 12, 1970, and Navy Seaman James M. Termini, who died Feb. 25, 1966.

Zukowski said each tree will have a marble marker at its base, engraved with the name of a soldier. The markers, which will cost $640 to have engraved, were partially paid for by members of the class of 1991, which raised $316. Greenock Country Club donated $100, and efforts are under way to raise the balance, said Zukowski. He said they will be installed sometime next spring.

The class of 1954 initiated the idea of honoring the local Vietnam soldiers by donating one tree, and Zukowski sought three more trees. Two came from Greenock Country Club and another came from the town's superintendent of public works, J. Peter Scolforo. Brenda Dupras, a graduate of the class of 1991, obtained the marble markers, each 6 by 14 inches, from the Lee Marble Co.

Zukowski, who has worked in the Lee school system for many years, said he remembers each of the four men, and that the ceremony on Saturday was "one of the real good ones."

The VFW color guard and firing squad were on hand, and a volley was fired in tribute. Trumpet players April Slater and Timothy Maxfield played taps.

The following relatives were presented with red, white and blue carnations and photos of the trees: Frances Moretti of Pittsfield, sister of James Termini; Louise Whalen of Lee, mother of Michael Whalen; Albert and Ruth Cummings of South Hadley, parents of Charles Cummings, and Barbara Perry of Housatonic, who was the wife of Bruce Stevenson.

It is the first memorial in town to be dedicated to Lee men who died in the Vietnam conflict. Zukowski said he hopes that local Vietnam and Korean veterans will someday be honored with a memorial of their own.

■ LEE, from B1

Lee honors four who died during the Vietnam War

Advocate 11-13-91

Lee teachers approve new 3-year contract

Ending months of negotiations, the Lee Teachers Association has approved a three-year contract, association president Neil Clarke said Tuesday. Clarke said he did not want to comment on the contract until after the Lee School Committee acts on the proposal Tuesday.

Lee School Superintendent Henry Zukowski, however, said the contract, effective from July of this year, calls for a 3-percent annual salary hike. The salary increase will mean that school officials will have to reconsider budget line items because the school's budget this year remained the same as last year's budget.

Daniel Bellow / Berkshire Eagle Staff

It took a large crew to haul a stray white-faced Hereford from a Lee swimming pool yesterday.

Heifer rescued from pool

Tow trucks, firemen haul shivering cow from icy water

By Daniel O. Bellow 11-10-91
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — It took three tow trucks and a dozen firemen from Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge to extricate a yearling heifer that fell into David Dobson's swimming pool on Stockbridge Road yesterday.

Dobson said the cow, believed to be the property of farmer Robert Bartini, had been eating apples off his tree that morning, and he had called Bartini to come get it. When he returned from an errand at 11:15 a.m., the beast had fallen into his swimming pool, ripping the plastic cover, and was thrashing around in the shallow end.

The firemen and wrecker crews pondered how best to remove the 500-pound cow, which after an hour in the icy water was shivering and appeared to be suffering from hypothermia. In hypothermia, the body temperature drops.

She had evidently been loose for some time, as her hair was covered with burdocks from wandering in the woods. She had gotten through two fences, one of barbed wire and the other a wood split-rail type, to get to the swimming pool.

Would-be rescuers tied an orange extension cord around the neck of the Hereford heifer and tried to position a strap under her forelegs, but every time they attempted to lift the animal, she began to struggle and the strap came loose, dumping her back into the pool.

They exchanged cow jokes — "mooove over," and "looks like burgers for lunch," but their concern for the suffering animal was evident. At one time they worried she would die there.

After two wrecker crews had tried and failed, Santino A. Dellea of Stockbridge Motors was summoned. Dellea said he had experience in extracting bovines from swimming pools and quickly proved it. He attached two straps under both sets of legs, and after one false start, was able to lift the struggling heifer to safety.

Once on dry land, the heifer appeared overcome by her ordeal, and efforts to get her to stand up were to no avail. Her rescuers laid her on the ground, and Dobson brought some horse blankets to keep her warm. Dellea moved his red tow truck so that the warm exhaust blew on her.

Dobson said one of Bartini's cows had fallen into his swimming pool about 10 years ago, and his wife, Gail, got it out with a broomstick, but that was a larger cow that could put her front hooves on the pool deck and still push with her back hooves. That cow kicked a hole in the swimming pool wall that caused the water to drain out and the pool had to be repaired, but yesterday's incident did not appear to have caused damage, Dobson said.

HEIFER, continued on B4

The cow was not the only animal in trouble yesterday in Lee.

At about the same time that the heifer came to grief, a dog chased a cat up onto Timothy Gray's Bradley Street roof and got stuck up there, 20 feet above the ground, Lee police Officer Henry Smachetti reported.

Gray tried to get the dog, not his own, down from the roof, but it nipped at him every time he got close.

30

talk of the towns

The Phantom of the Opera at Lenox Town Hall

Having successfully shown *The Gold Rush* at Lenox Town Hall, a special committee plans to continue showing classic movies in the historic building. The next showtime will be Nov. 30 at 8 p.m. when *The Phantom of the Opera* starring Lon Chaney will hit the movie screen.

Lenox musician Mike Schiffer will perform accompanying music to the silent movie on the piano. Schiffer accompanied *The Gold Rush* saying that it was one of the most challenging and enjoyable jobs he has ever done.

Close to 90 people attended the first screening. Committee Chairman Richard Houdek, who is a SOUTH ADVOCATE columnist, says that although the screening was a critical success, it was a money loser. He hopes to break even with the showing of the original screen version of *The Phantom of the Opera*. The screenings have been privately funded.

"If there ever is a profit, the money will go into the Town Hall Arts Center fund" for new equipment, Houdek says. The town recently completed the painting of the exterior of the downtown building as part of the selectmen's efforts to restore the building's attractiveness and role as a community center for cultural activities.

Advocate 11-13-91

Lee's Golden Hill Bridge appears to be in limbo

After months of discussion, it now appears as if the Golden Hill Bridge in Lee will neither be restored nor replaced.

Selectman Martin Deely says the state Department of Public Works is unwilling to spend the hundreds of thousands of dollars required to rehabilitate the 19th-century bridge. Nor will the state build a new bridge to replace it against the wishes of the town.

"What that means is the Golden Hill Bridge is in limbo," Deely says. "All plans are in a stop position. The state is going to inspect it for safety but I'd say it's going to stay in its present condition for a while."

The bridge is in a deteriorating condition and DPW officials say it will either have to be repaired, replaced or closed in the near future.

In other town business, the selectmen:

-- Voted to let the U.S. Department of Labor use office space in the Airoldi Building for one or two days a week to meet with long-term laid off workers from south county. The federal agency is expected to use the office for about two months.

-- Instructed Building Inspector Robert Lester to make the Sullivan Station remove a sign from the Chambery Inn property. If the sign, which the board says is an illegal off-premises sign, is not removed, the Selectmen say they should consider taking the restaurant to court.

-- Appointed Kimberly-Clark Corp. executive John Philpott and Mead Specialty Paper Division president David Klausmeyer to the town manager search committee.

Advocate 11-13-91

Lethal Innocence shows off Berkshire County

The Berkshires will double tonight on television as the Cambodian countryside and a Vermont town that bears an identical resemblance to Lee, when the locally filmed television movie *Lethal Innocence* will be broadcast on Channel 57 tonight (Wednesday) at 9 p.m.

Starring Blair Brown, Brenda Fricker and Teresa Wright, the movie is about a 13-year-old Cambodian refugee who is adopted by a Vermont family that embarks on an uphill struggle to reunite the boy with his Cambodian family. The film's title comes from an underlying theme of the movie that partially condemns most of the American public for turning a blind eye to the Cambodian refugee problem which the United States played an instrumental role in causing, but not resolving.

Many, many Berkshire residents including the Lee High School band can be spotted in the movie as extras. Several scenes take place on Lee's Main Street, in Lee Power Equipment, Jack's clothing store, the Stockbridge Congregational Church, Sullivan Station restaurant, The Fruit Basket, two Berkshire homes, several rural settings and at the Pittsfield Airport.

"We had a wonderful experience," says producer Nan Bernstein-Freed of Tyringham who was largely responsible for the filming of the movie here last spring. "I hope we can do something like that again sometime."

Lenox gets ready for 225th

Celebrants of the 225th anniversary of Lenox are hoping to make 1992 a year-long commemoration of the town's history. Armed with $2,500 from the town and hoping to raise more through donations, the committee hopes to hold several events during the course of next year.

Advocate 11-13-91

Lee Learning Center program lets parents shop

The Lee Learning Center is heading north for this Christmas season. In a program with the Berkshire Mall, the Lee-based day- care center will provide holiday drop-in child care at the mall during the upcoming holiday season from Saturday through Dec. 24.

Located in Steiger's court area, the program will be available Mondays through Saturdays from noon to 8 p.m. at the cost of $3 an hour per child. As an additional service, parents will be given a beeper so they may remain in constant contact with their children.

Rockwell Museum tops off new building with cupola

Topping off another milestone in the lengthy history of the new and improved Norman Rockwell Museum, contractors placed the cupola on to the new museum building at Linwood Estate last week.

The event symbolizes the end of the exterior work for the museum and means that contractors will be able to do interior work this winter.

Designed by architect Robert A.M. Stern, construction of the building marks not only the expansion and relocation of the museum from its present site on Stockbridge Main Street but also allows the 22-year-old museum to expand its programs.

The new museum will have 27,000 square feet and will offer five times as much exhibition space as the Old Corner House.

Museum officials say the new museum will go beyond

Derrick leaving Main Street

11-13-91

Lee Hardware store, in the words of one of its workers, can be best described as "confusing, crazy and disorganized."

Standing at the helm of this seemingly chaotic business -- which has served as one of about 15 mainstays on Main Street in Lee -- for the last 18 years has been Bill Derrick.

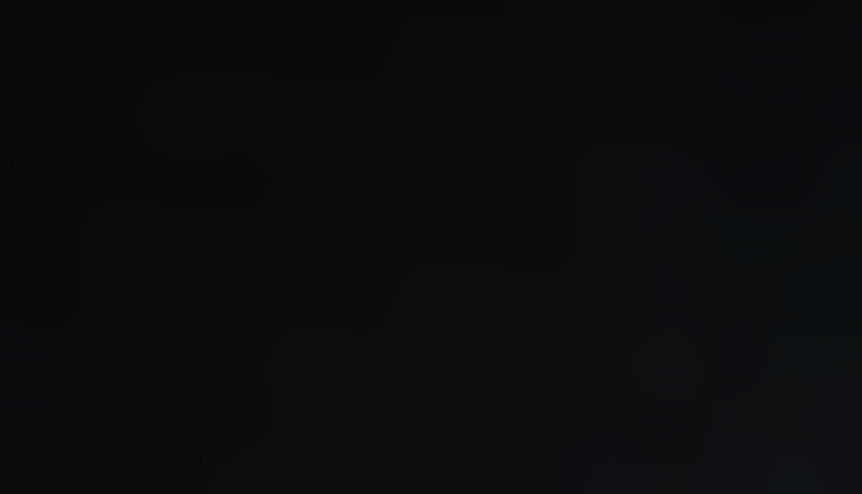
But last week Derrick stepped down as owner of the business selling the store to his son-in-law Joseph Scapin. Derrick says he was growing stale at the job and needed a change. A town assessor, Derrick says he is thinking of becoming a professional appraiser.

As a Main Street business owner, worker and postal clerk in the early 1960s, Derrick has been a first-hand witness to change and stability in the center of Lee for more than a quarter-century.

He says he has seen Main Street improve its appearance, the traffic grow by leaps and bounds and shoppers become more sophisticated and savvy with prices.

But, by and large, Derrick says that neither Lee nor its people has changed much.

"Lee hasn't changed really," he says. "I moved here in 1952 and I certainly wouldn't want to be anywhere else. The people here are good. I like to help people in the town of Lee and I think that if I needed it, the people of Lee would help me. I think they'd help anyone. It's pretty hard to find a town like this anymore."



Bill Derrick, *owner of Lee Hardware for the last 18 years and a long-time Lee official, has sold his Main Street business to his son-in-law.*

He rattles off instances of people doing good deeds: Fire Chief Ronald Driscoll and Lee Volunteer Ambulance President Kenneth LeBier "are the two greatest volunteers any town can have. Look at the Kiwanis, the Rotary, the Lion's Club; they do so much for people that people don't realize. There's just so much of that in this town."

Lends a helping hand

Derrick -- who also a reputation as a practical jokes -- has been on the giving side of the equation as owner of Lee Hardware. Over the years he has hired dozens of youths -- many of whom have been down on their luck or disabled in some way -- given them responsibility and job skills.

"I like to help give them a start," Derrick says when asked about it. "Well, of course, you know they all work for me, so it's not as if I don't get anything out of it."

And even though Derrick and other Lee town officials often get into squabbles, Derrick says the fights usually do not transcend into personal feuds.

"You can disagree. I disagreed with Martin Deely about a town administrator but when it was over we went out together. There was no grudge," Derrick says.

Scattered thoughts

Other observations Derrick makes about the town, Main Street, the hardware store business and customers follow:

-- Despite the recessionary economy, Derrick says Lee is in relatively good shape because of the presence of Mead Specialty Paper Division and Kimberly-Clark which still employ hundreds of people each and have stable businesses. "People keep talking about the unemployment but I don't see it being as bad for Lee."

-- Main Street has improved markedly over the years as business owners have restored their storefronts and additions were made to the downtown. "Definitely the street looks a lot better," he says. "Every building has improved in some way."

-- Customers have become more price and quality conscious over the years, he says. "They shop different. They're better buyers. The homeowners do a lot for themselves. They tend to be do-it-yourselfers because they want to save money."

-- The hardware business has changed as companies constantly try to come up with new products and have taken over the wholesale business. Hardware stores now belong to cooperatives that distribute products, thus elminating the wholesaler and reducing retail prices.

-- "I'm going to miss the people. I really enjoyed them -- the good and the bad. The bad have to be part of it."

Lee may take over Mountain View road

Advocate, 11-13-91

Faced with the prospect of the bankruptcy of a local developer, the Lee Department of Public Works may have to complete work on construction of the Mountain View subdivision road.

DPW Superintendent Peter Scolforo says developer Glen Hoff has verbally notified the town that he is filing for bankruptcy and has asked that the town take over construction of the subdivision road.

Scolforo estimates the project will cost $40,000 with the money coming out of a $47,000 performance bond that Hoff secured the development with. Before the town begins work, however, Scolforo says it must get written confirmation that Hoff can not finish the project himself.

The subdisivion includes 14 building lots, but only two houses have been built. Scolforo says the road is in disrepair and is impassable in some locations.

"This is the first time it's happened," Scolforo says of the town taking over the construction of a private subdivision. "We've never seen this before. All of a sudden you've got some houses up and the guy pulls out."

CORRECTIONS

Readers of last week's SOUTH ADVOCATE had good reason to be confused. Through a printer's error, four extra pages ran in the newspaper last week that were intended for our sister newspaper, The ADVOCATE, in Williamstown. Those pages -- 8a, 8b, 16a and 16b -- included stories about southern Vermont, Lanesboro and Williamstown.

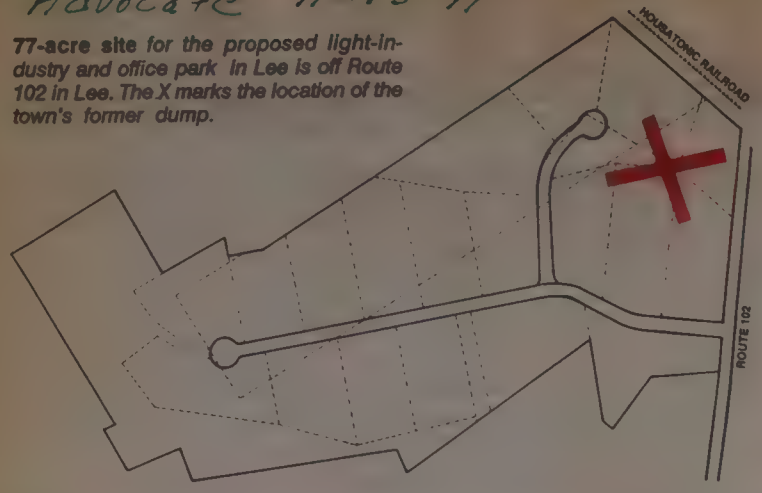
To get further information about the Alexander technique for back relief write: the North American Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique at P.O Box 3992, Champagne, Ill. 61826-3992, or call 217-359-3529. The Oct. 30 edition of The SOUTH ADVOCATE gave an incorrect address and telephone number.

Pittsfield mayoral candidate Edward M. Reilly -- who won the election -- was inaccurately quoted because of typographical error in the Oct. 30 edition of The SOUTH ADVOCATE. Reilly's quotation was that there would be "no new jobs" in City Hall. The SOUTH ADVOCATE regrets the error.

TOTAL CLOTHING

Lee gets ready for industry

Advocate 11-13-91



77-acre site for the proposed light-industry and office park in Lee is off Route 102 in Lee. The X marks the location of the town's former dump.

Industrial park poised to move

By Erik Bruun

Plucked from the heap of moribund economic development projects, the long-awaited Lee Industrial Park is poised for a rebirth.

As the result of a two-pronged effort, Lee officials hope to begin development of the 77-acre parcel next year. If successful, the park would house up to 1,000 jobs and serve as a model site for other Berkshire light industry and office parks.

"We want it to look like a college," says Jill Goff, chairman of the Planning Board's bylaw revision committee which has drawn up a comprehensive bylaw for the development. "We feel this will be beneficial not just for Lee, but for all of Berkshire County."

At least two local businesses are very interested in moving into the park and several others have inquired about the industrial park, says Anthony Caropreso, a member of the Lee Community Development Corp.

"A year from now, the park may be in place," says Caropreso who continued working on the project long after many others had almost given up on the project. It will take many years, however, before it is fully occupied.

Continued on page 17

Planners want to revamp bylaws

When the Lee Planning Board first took on the task of creating a new zoning district for a proposed light-industry park, board members thought they would restrict themselves to that one task.

But what they discovered, instead, was that almost the town's entire zoning regulations need to be revised and improved. As a result, in addition to creating a new zoning district, the Planning Board is suggesting the town adopt stricter and more consistent standards for all developments of any size.

The specific proposals on tap for review and vote by the town are requirements making applicants submit environmental impact reports and being subject to a better defined site plan review process.

"We want to equalize the process," says Jill Goff, chairman of the Planning Board's bylaw revision subcommittee. "Both the zoning bylaws and the subdivision regula-

Continued on page 16

Advocate Nov. 13, 1991 Page 16

Lee planners want to revise town bylaws

Continued from page 1

tions need to be totally revamped. We have a cookbook of things we'd like to do."

Goff and Planning Board Chairman Robert Birch acknowledge that the changes the board seeks will require both new rules and a new attitude among many town officials and project applicants.

"Some of these things are long overdue," Birch says.

Just in the last few months, the town has encountered serious problems in how projects were handled including a six-apartment building proposed by Robert Garrity, a special permit for The Locker Room, and several sign permits.

In all instances, the town has had to revisit the issues because officials were either inconsistant or ambiguous in their handling of the projects.

"I think we all have to plead guilty to some of the things that have occurred," Birch says.

By adopting new, better defined regulations, Birch and Goff say the town can get a better grip on its planning issues. With a drop in the number of applicants seeking permits for new construction, Birch says the Planning Board has been given some time to work on revisions.

Nevertheless, Goff says the board has had to schedule special meetings to review and revise the town's bylaws. The board's latest proposals were the result of over a year's worth of meetings with the board meeting weekly for much of that time.

Goff says she and other board members were aware that the town's bylaws were out of date when they first began work on the Office Park and Light Industrial (OPLI) bylaw. But the problems became much more apparent as they began to consider the ramifications of the OPLI bylaw.

"One new zoning district affects every other zoning district in town," Goff says. "If in an OPLI a site plan is needed. well then maybe it's needed in every other zoning district."

The board's preliminary proposal calls for new requirements giving the Planning Board the authority to recommend conditions for projects to limit a development's impact on neighbors and to ensure that certain standards are met. In addition, multiple dwelling developments will have to be given site plan review from the Board of Health, Planning Board and Conservation Commission.

Also, applicants for larger projects would be required to submit environmental impact statements. The reports would have to include descriptions of a project's impact on sewage disposal, the physical environment, subsurface conditions, surface water and the human environment.

All of the Planning Board's zoning bylaw proposals, which have not been finalized, will go through a public hearing process and will have to be approved by town representatives in a town-meeting vote.

Eagle 11-13-91

Lee school employees ratify pact

LEE — The Lee Education Assocation has ratified a three-year contract giving school employees a 3 percent raise for this year, retroactive to Sept. 1 when the previous contract expired.

Neil F. Clarke, president of the union representing 78 school employees, said the union voted last Thursday on the contract after a year of negotiations, which were "protracted and difficult, but understandable given the [economic] conditions."

Employees will receive 3 percent raises for each of the three years of the contract.

The membership's attitude was one of "resignation to conditions being what they are." He declined to disclose the vote.

He said he did not want to discuss further details of the contract until after the School Committee votes to approve it.

School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said he expects to place the contract matter on the agenda at the School Committee's meeting Tuesday night.

Eagle 11-13-91

$2,000 is raised for two groups

LEE — Century Berkshire Cable raised $2,000 for the Housatonic Parent-Teacher Organization and the Great Barrington Playground Committee during a September fund-raising campaign, according to an announcement from Philip Hopkins, general manager.

Each group was presented a check for $1,000 at Century's Nov. 2 open house toward the construction of playground equipment, the announcement said.

The playground equipment will be constructed at the Housatonic Elementary School on Saturday, and at the Bryant School on Saturday, Nov. 23. Both organizations are still seeking volunteers.

Approximately 150 attended Century's Nov. 2 open house, Hopkins said.

Eagle 11-13-91

Bovine bather christened 'Splash' after her big chill

LEE — "Splash," the white-faced Hereford heifer who fell into David Dobson's swimming pool Saturday, suffered no ill effects from her impromptu swim, farmer Robert Bartini said.

"She's running around now — healthy, as far as we can tell," Bartini said. After being rescued by local firemen and tow truck operators, the cow appeared to have suffered a chill, but she has recovered and been christened Splash in honor of her aquatic adventure.

Bartini said he had been in Pennsylvania over the weekend, and when he got home he walked the pasture fence but couldn't find the spot where the cow had escaped. He thanked his neighbors for helping him.

The swimming pool at Dobson's Stockbridge Road home apparently was undamaged by the bovine's Esther Williams imitation. A claims adjuster from Aetna Insurance Co., Bartini's insurer, was to inspect the pool today, Bartini said.

He also said The Eagle was in error in reporting that it was a cow belonging to him that fell into Dobson's pool 10 years ago.

32

Advocate 11-13-91

Paul Lisi is owner of Powder House Shop off Route 20 in Lee.

Powder House Shop moves, expands in new Lee location

After doing business as a furniture restorer for seven years in Lenox, Paul Lisi has moved his business, The Powder House Shop, to Lee and expanded it to include an antiques store.

Lisi, who learned the restoration business from his father-in-law, H.C. Thorton Jr., says he moved the shop earlier this year to accommodate his growing business.

"I do it the old-fashioned way vs. the modern way," Lisi says. "There's not much that I can't fix."

Although most of the furniture in his shop during a recent visit were wooden antiques, Lisi says he restores all types of furniture including contemporary pieces. Lisi's clients include The Red Lion Inn and Serenak.

With the poor economy, Lisi says many people have decided to restore their old furniture rather than buy new pieces. While it may be tempting for people to try to do their own restoration work, Lisi says most people do not know how to do the work properly and may inadvertently ruin their funiture.

In making the move to a new location on U.S. Route 20 in Lee next to the Black Swan Inn earlier this year, Lisi also opened an antiques store that offers an eclectic collection of novelties, furniture and accessories. Some of the items for sale include Depression glass, antique prints, Colonial furniture, antique sheet music and many accessories.

Lisi says he gets most of the merchandise from estate sales and many of the items are sold on consignment. Because of the recession, sales in the store have been slow, he says, but adds that he has been kept busy on the restoration side of the business.

11-13-91

Lee ind. park moving forward

Continued from page 1

County planning officials say the project could be the most attractive site for economic development in the county because of its location less than a mile from the Mass. Turnpike and right next to the Housatonic Railroad tracks.

Less than a year ago, the proposed industrial park was all but dead. A suspected hazardous waste site on the property stood in the way of the town acquiring the land and discouraged owners of one of the three properties off Route 102 from selling their land.

But the Massachusetts Land Bank and state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, intervened. Hodgkins and state Sen. Jane Swift, R-North Adams, have helped prepare legislation allowing the state agency to acquire the property, test the land for hazardous waste and bear the responsibility for cleaning the site up.

The Mass. Land Bank would also provide 90 percent of the money needed to develop the property. A study three years ago estimated it would cost $3 million to prepare the land for development.

The legislation has been approved by the Senate and is expected to be acted on this week by the House.

"It's on the fast track," says Richard T. DelMasto, an aide to Hodgkins.

At the same time, the Lee Planning Board is ready to unveil its comprehensive bylaw creating an Office Park and Light Industrial (OPLI) zoning district for the project. Planning Board members have been working on the proposal for almost two years.

The preliminary bylaw describes in detail what type of lighting would be allowed, restrictions for noise and pollution, provisions for waste and refuse, and several other restrictions on potentially offensive side effects of the park to neighbors.

"We want something that is pleasing to the eye and at the same time functional," says Planning Board Chairman Robert Birch. "We don't want the site to have industrial development to be the same way it was 20, 30, 40 years ago."

Goff says the Planning Board will most likely hold public hearings for residents to review the proposal. The Planning Board will then review the bylaw again to consider the public input and finally submit a final version for approval by voters at a special town meeting.

The Selectmen have already said they will hold a special town meeting in January or February to solely consider the bylaw proposal, which will also include new provisions requiring environmental impact reports and a site plan review process. The bylaw will need a two-thirds majority vote for approval.

If the state intervenes in the process and the town approves the bylaw, Caropreso says the only major remaining hurdle will be the results of a hazardous waste study on the property. Once used as a town dump, officials are anxious that the cost of cleaning up the site will be prohibitive.

But because the town used to burn materials at the dump, Caropreso says the extent of hazardous waste may be limited. If that is the case, the state will take responsibility for removing the contaminated material.

Donald Hopkins, who owns the parcel with his sister where the former dump is located, says he is not aware of the progress of the project as nobody has kept him informed. Up until now, Hopkins has been unwilling to sell the property because the transaction would be a taxable event. He says he would sell the property to the Mass. Land Bank provided he is no longer responsible for a cleanup, but it would all depend on what the offer is. If Hopkins refuses to sell, the state legislation gives the Mass. Land Bank authority to acquire the property by eminent domain.

On the financial side, the Mass. Land Bank would lend the Lee CDC 90 percent of the money needed to develop the property. The CDC would use proceeds from selling building lots to pay off the loan, Caropreso says. Caropreso adds that the remaining 10 percent of the money could come from either a federal grant or loan, or a loan from a pool of local banks.

The park would consist of 18 2- to 3-acre building surounded by 16 acres of open space. When fully developed, Caropreso says, the property could yield $670,000 a year to the town in property taxes.

Both a wholesaler and a theatrical supply company have expressed an interest in locating in the park, Caropreso says. Despite the recession, Caropreso says others have shown preliminary interest in the park. Further, he says, when the economy turns around, Lee will want to be prepared to offer building sites for expanding businesses. Although ECH Will Manufacturing Co.'s desire to relocate was the impetus three years ago to develop a Lee industrial park, the manufacturing company has placed its moving plans on hold until the economy turns around.

The Lee project would be the latest of several industrial park developments throughout Berkshire County designed to offer low-cost building lots to businesses.

Birch says Lee is not trying to compete with other communities for businesses but is rather trying to complement the county's offerings. Other industrial park developments include the Adams Corporate Park in Adams, an office and technology park off Dan Fox Drive on the Pittsfield-Lenox line, as well as several other proposals in Pittsfield.

"There's room for all of them," Birch says. "There has got to be a countywide effort to create jobs or else we are going to be in a lot of trouble."

Continued on

Advocate 11-13-91

Lee honors four local men killed in Vietnam

Commemorating the service of four Lee men killed in the Vietnam War, four maple trees planted at Lee High School were formerly dedicated to the men at a ceremony Saturday.

The men were Navy Lt. Bruce H. Stevenson, Army Copl. Michael C. Whalen, Army Spec. 4th Class Charles H. Cummings and Navy Seaman James M. Termini.

The trees were donated by the Lee High class of 1954, Greenock Country Club, and Lee Department of Public Works. the trees were planted eight years ago.

Lee School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski helped orchestrate the dedication and ceremony. The memorials, which will be marked with marble stones donated by the Lee High class of 1991, are the first ones in the town commemorating the services of Lee's veterans in the Vietnam War.

"There has been no dedication to the Vietnam dead," Zukowski says. "I figured this would be the proper time."

Housatonic Water gets long-term rate increase

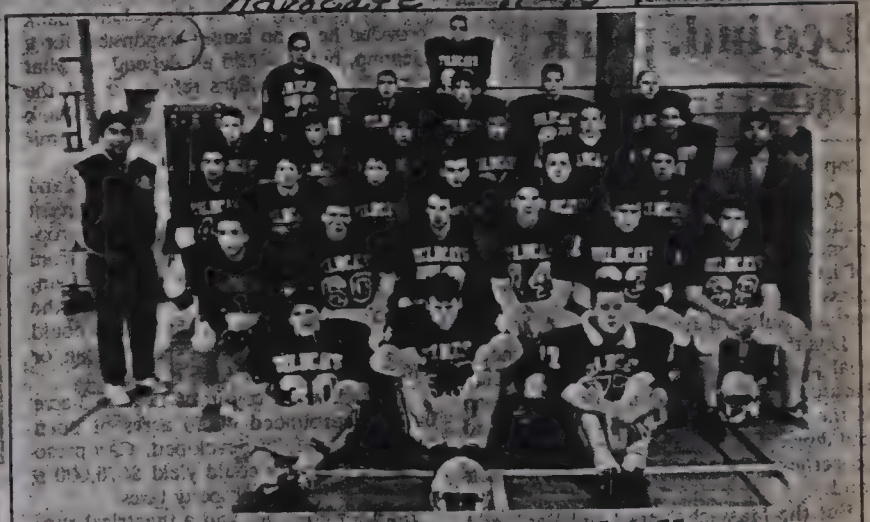
The state Department of Public Utilities has authorized an increase in revenues for the Housatonic Water Co. of 188 percent over the next five years. The new rate increase, which will mean an immediate increase in fees of 88.9 percent, will become effective Dec. 1. Further fee increases will be allowed over the course of the next several years.

The announcement comes after a more than two-year struggle between the privately owned water company and state agencies. Bitterly opposed by Housatonic residents, the Housatonic Water Co. sought the increase to pay for improvements in the local water system that were required by new state and federal laws.

The agreement came only after lengthy negotiations and the intervention of town officials, several residents and state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee.

Lee ind

Advocate 11-13-91



Undefeated Lee JV football team offers promising future for varsity

While the Lee varsity football team grabbed most of the headlines this season, many local football enthusiasts have been looking forward to the aging of the junior varsity team.

Undefeated for the last two seasons, many of the JV team's stars will be old enough and seasoned enough to be on next year's varsity team.

"This is a good bunch of kids," says coach Timothy Shepardson, who has followed many of the students as they graduated from the PeeWee League to the Junior League and into high school. "They're very coachable. They listen to what you tell them. The line is very good. Hopefully, they'll really come on next year."

Success has followed the youngsters as they grew into different leagues. Shepardson coached the youngsters to an undefeated championship PeeWee season in 1987. The youths have rarely lost in organized football since then. Their last game of teh season was a 40-0 victory over Wahconah Regional High School's junior varsity team.

Shepardson cites halfback Peter Digriglio, lineman Josh LeGrant and quaterback Jeff Puleri ("he can throw the ball 60 yards," Shepardson says) as the stars of the team.

Is the rest of the Berkshire football world nervous about the graduation of the JV team to varsity?

"I don't know," Shepardson says. "I hope so."

Religious group resurrects Lee church

■ CHURCH, from B1

A wish list includes an attic area that could be finished for additional space. The basement area could also be finished some day, and a kitchen will be installed eventually. New carpeting is also on the list of future plans, he said.

On Saturday, members showed up at the new church to help spruce it up, installing partitions and sheetrock to make classrooms, and cleaning the inside, said church member LuAnn Herring of Center Street.

"We got it looking good," she said.

Meanwhile, worship will begin Sunday morning. And the lights will be on at the church often for youth groups and other activities, he said. The church also operates a food pantry, which Gardner said he expects to expand further into Southern Berkshire County.

Berkshire Bible Church was formed in 1987, after The Bible Speaks ministry relocated to the Baltimore, Md., area in the midst of a controversial lawsuit brought by a former member and a bankruptcy that led to the sale of the large Lenox campus.

Many of The Bible Speaks followers left the Berkshires and relocated with the ministry.

However, some stayed behind and Gardner, who had been a pastor with The Bible Speaks for more than 10 years, established the Berkshire Bible Church.

Initially the church meetings were held wherever space was available — at Berkshire Community College, the Berkshire Hilton, Lenox Memorial High School, the Great Barrington Fairgrounds.

Then the church found 5,700 square feet of rental space at St. Luke's Square in Pittsfield, a small shopping center. In addition to serving as a place of worship, the St. Luke's Square space also housed a Christian day school, which has since ceased operating, said Gardner.

In June 1989, the church purchased the New Lenox Road property, with an eye toward building a new church there. But the cost would have been prohibitive — at about a half-million dollars, Gardner said last summer.

But Gardner said many members of the church come from Lee. He himself lives in Pittsfield and may at some point move to Lee, he said.

Herring, whose husband, Robert, owns a business in town, previously belonged to The Bible Speaks. She said her family considered following the ministry to Maryland, but decided that Lee is home to them.

She said Berkshire Bible Church is not only made up of former Bible Speaks members, but includes many new families as well. The church has members from as far away as Sheffield, Great Barrington and Housatonic, she said.

Growth potential

And the potential for further growth is good with the new church, she said.

"We've had a lot of comments from people who are interested in coming out but who don't feel comfortable going to Pittsfield," she said.

Berkshire Bible Church has an informal, "spiritual" tie with what is now the Greater Grace World Outreach, the name adopted by the ministry that relocated to Baltimore, said Gardner.

But Berkshire Bible Church is independent and self-supporting. It's decisions are made locally, he said.

"We share a spiritual kinship with the fellowship in Baltimore, and other like-minded churches," said Gardner. "We don't make any apologies for that."

For Herring and her family, the new Lee church is "wonderful."

"It's exciting to think our church will be in town," she said.

ee golf plan needs organization

Colorado course planner addresses town's concerns

By Bob McDonough
Berkshire Eagle Staff 11-14-91

E – If people in Lee want a golf course built on the r Burtt Farm, they should ize a committee to pursue roject and be prepared for "hot public hearings" on sue.

t was part of the message evolved yesterday from a ng that featured town offi- and several proponents of roject, including Donald V. ti vice president and na- l marketing director for Golf Corp. of Denver, Colo., proposes to build an 18- course on the 128-acre parcel lease-purchase agreement he town.

o attending with Barnett was LaPoint of Golf Resource Associates, which does feasibility studies for such projects. They were in Massachusetts yesterday primarily to put the final touches on a similar project in Bridgewater, which would be the 22nd community nationwide to enter into a lease-purchase agreement with First Golf, Barnett said.

Barnett emphasized that it would be foolish to go ahead with a golf course proposal without land, adequate water, a proven economic need and a desire by the town to own the course.

"It's like a four-legged stool," Barnett said. "If we don't have all four legs, the stool tips over, we're a dead duck and we part friends right now."

Barnett pointed to a situation he encountered in Columbia, Tenn., where there was land, water and desire, but a feasibility study proved there was no need for a course.

Former State Sen. John Fitzpatrick of Stockbridge has offered to pay the $7,500 to $8,000 for the feasibility study, but the town has to decide whether it wants to spend the $500,000 asking price for the land, then enter into a debt situation until the $2-3 million golf course is paid for and the town takes it over. Barnett said that would be a 20-year agreement, with his company charging between 7 and 8 percent interest.

"I'd like to see some solid financial numbers, so something that's supposed to be $50,000 doesn't become $150,000," Selectman Martin Deely said. "We've got to have some hot pub-

LEE, continued on C3

Lee, Lenox out of sync on water plant

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff 11-15-91

LEE — Lee and Lenox officials have postponed indefinitely a meeting to discuss sharing a treatment plant for water from the Washington Mountain Brook Project.

The meeting was to be held Monday night in Lee.

Lenox Selectmen Chairman John J. Pignatelli had pursued the session with the Lee Selectmen to talk about how both towns can curb the completion costs of the water supply project, but Lee wanted to wait, he said.

J. Peter Scolforo, Lee's superintendent of public works, said it's too early to start talking about a shared water treatment plant.

Time to spare

Under a state order to start filtering its water, Lee doesn't have to begin designing its filtration plant until mid-1993. Lenox, which already treats its existing water supply, has no deadline but could require the extra water the next time there's a drought.

Scolforo did not seem concerned about losing a potential partnership with Lenox.

"I don't know why they don't just buy Pittsfield water," he said. "It would be the cheapest way to go."

"If they don't wish to participate, we won't waste their time," said Pignatelli. "They have a bigger problem than we have."

Martin H. Deely, a Lee selectman, said that "nobody's heart's really in it," and that Lee has not done the planning necessary to talk about sharing a plant.

"Everybody's hoping it will go away," he said of the expensive project, which is intended to boost water supplies to both towns.

Man-made lakes

The Washington Mountain Brook water project includes three man-made lakes in October Mountain State Forest. Two are intended to provide water to Lee and Lenox; another, Washington Mountain Lake, is intended for flood control. That lake is empty while its dam is being repaired.

The cost of the third and final dam in the project, at Schoolhouse Lake, was shared by the towns, as is the cost of a common pipeline.

However, each town had originally planned to build its own water treatment plant. The cost of those plants is estimated at about $2 million each, and officials have been talking about shaving that cost by building a single plant for both towns.

Deely said the public works boards from both communities will probably get together at some point to talk about the matter.

Neither town has suffered from the severe water shortages of the early 1980s, when the Washington Mountain Brook project was pushed ahead. Lenox has been able to supplement its supply by purchasing water from Pittsfield.

But Pittsfield itself has been prone to water shortages during droughts. In the most extreme case, during the mid-1960s, Pittsfield had to pump water from Onota Lake.

Historical designation sought for Golden Hill Road bridge

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Plans to replace or repair the 106-year-old Golden Hill bridge are on hold while the Lee Historical Commission works to have the structure placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The designation would mean that the federal government would foot part of the bill to restore the pony truss bridge, which may be the oldest one of its kind in the state, said Carol Marino, a member of the Lee Historical Commission and district aide to state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee.

Marino said nearly everyone in attendance at a meeting of the Golden Hill Bridge Committee on Nov. 7 agreed that the bridge should be restored, not replaced with "a concrete monstrosity." The session was held to discuss options for replacing the span.

The wrought-iron bridge, which has a 5-ton capacity, has suffered from lack of maintenance for many years. In March, a state engineering consultant deemed it "eligible for replacement," and this year a town committee formed to decide how the replacement should be handled.

Ross B. Dindio, district engineer for the state Department of Public Works, said the DPW has received mixed messages from town officials about how the bridge's inadequacies should be dealt with. Until his office gets a consensus from the town, he said, it won't proceed with engineering plans to replace or repair the structure.

'The DPW won't ram a project down a community's throat.'

The DPW does not have the money to carry out a historic restoration, he said, but federal money could make it happen.

No one seems to want a concrete replacement span, he said, and his office won't push for that solution if the community objects.

"The DPW won't ram a project down a community's throat," he said.

Marino said the bridge is already recognized as a historical structure by the Massachusetts Historical Commission, but the state doesn't provide extra money for restoration.

The bridge handles only about 50 vehicles per day, and emergency vehicles and school buses no longer use it to get to Golden Hill Road, for which there are other access routes.

"The bridge has historical value, and it would be a shame to tear it down," said Dindio.

He said the bridge has not reached the point where it is unsafe, but if it does, he said, his office will shut it down.

Golden Bridge Left Dangling By State DPW

Record 11-15-91

LEE—The state Department of Public Works has left the Golden Hill Road bridge somewhere between the moon and New York City.

Claiming it doesn't want to spend the money to restructure the span over the Housatonic River, the DPW also said it wouldn't build a bigger, stronger bridge against residents' wishes.

The seven-year-old, $400,000 project was abandoned last week after state officials listened to more than 30 residents object to plans for a new bridge.

"The old bridge is in limbo," said Selectman Martin Deely, who also reported that state inspectors would examine the existing 1885, 80-foot, 5-ton rating structure for safety and report back to the town.

In other business, selectmen:

• Voted to let a federal Department of Labor representative use a room in the town-owned Airoldi Building one or two days a week to meet with long-term, laid-off workers from South County.

3c

Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Members of the 1991 All-Berkshire girls' soccer team include, from left: FRONT ROW — Jeanet Barton of Lenox, Bridget Keator of St. Joseph's, co-MVP Tammy Tobin of Taconic, co-MVP Jen Maloney of Pittsfield, Jodi Palardi of Monument and Dina Souza of Lee. SECOND ROW — Melissa Meczywor of Mount Greylock, Erin Pero of Wahconah, Suzi Robinson of Hoosac, Katie Cinella of Lee, Megan Gibson of Pittsfield and Stephanie St. Peter of Monument Mountain. BACK ROW — Tita Thompson, Kara Woitkowski and Jen Dudziak of Wahconah, Jen Finnegan of Lee, Meri Genova of Mount Greylock and Tricia Schultz of Pittsfield.

Maloney, Tobin share MVP vote

Co-MVPs lead girls' soccer all-stars

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff 11/16/91

Throughout their varsity soccer careers, Pittsfield High's Jen Maloney and Taconic's Tammy Tobin have played with unquenchable spirit and maintained a high skill level that others have been measured against. The two senior players were capable of great individual efforts this past season while still displaying an unselfish style of play that served to upgrade the skills of those they played with.

Area coaches found there was little to choose between the two and accordingly topped their selections to this year's All-Berkshire team by naming Tobin and Maloney co-MVPs of this year's Berkshire County girls' soccer league. For Tobin, it was her third straight selection to the All-Berkshire team while Maloney earned honors for the second consecutive season.

Six other players were named to the All-Berkshire team for the second time. Midfield players Kara Woitkowski of Wahconah and Bridget Keator of St. Joseph's joined defensive players Jen Dudziak of Wahconah, Jen Finnegan of Lee, Melissa Meczywor of Mount Greylock and goalie Dina Souza of Lee in repeating All-Berkshire honors. Lenox goalie Jeanet Barton returned to the All-Berkshire team after having been a selection in 1989.

This year's team of 18 included just two underclassmen. They were junior midfielders Tricia Schultz of Pittsfield and Meczywor of Greylock.

Others named to the All-Berkshire first team, voted by the league's coaches, are Jodi Palardi and Stephanie St. Peter of Monument Mountain, Erin Pero and Tita Thompson of Wahconah, Suzi Robinson of Hoosac Valley, Katie Cinella of Lee, Megan Gibson of Pittsfield and Meri Genova of Mount Greylock.

Christmas fund drive starts in Lee

Eagle 11-17-91

LEE — The Edward Laliberte Toy Fund will open its 1991 Fund drive tomorrow. This year's goal is $3,900.

The fund provides Christmas toys for needy children from Lee, Tyringham and Lenox Dale. Help is available for children 10 years old and under.

The fund is sponsored by the Lee Police Association and is named for its founder Adelard J. "Eddie" Laliberte, a 30-year member of the Lee Police Department. He retired in 1978.

Last year the fund provided toys to about 70 children from 40 families.

Donations may be made in person to any Lee Police Officer, dropped off at the Communications Center in the Town Hall or mailed to P.O. Box 278, Lee 01238.

Applications for toys will be accepted until Dec. 6, but no late applications will be accepted. Toys will be distributed starting at 9 a.m. Dec. 20 from the former Department of Public Works offices in the Airoldi Building on Railroad Street.

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Francis X. Downing stands behind the counter in his Lee establishment.

McClelland's to go 'smoke free'

Lee drugstore won't sell or allow tobacco products

By Lewis C. Cuyler
Berkshire Eagle Staff 11-19-91

LEE — McClelland Drug Store at 43 Main St., one of the few remaining establishments of its kind with an authentic soda fountain that for decades has represented a haven for coffee and cigarette patrons, will go "smoke free" as of Jan. 1.

"The decision was made reluctantly. Most of the people I enjoy knowing are smokers," said Francis X. Downing, a nonsmoker who bought the business in the early 1970s.

Over the past two years, he said, he has been under increasing pressure from employees and patrons to ban smoking from the building and tobacco products from the shelves on the premise that encouraging smoking is not consistent with a health care business.

Downing said he had procrastinated, hoping that the problem would go away.

"It came to a head this fall," he said. "A significant customer returned some merchandise because it smelled of smoke."

The merchandise in question was a box of sanitary napkins that had been on the shelf for less than a week.

After the complaint was made, Downing said, he divided the contents of the package among selected employees and asked them to take individual pads home to see whether they detected the smoke odor.

Not consistent with mission

They did. The smell of tobacco smoke had penetrated the plastic packaging.

"The experience brought home to me what others had been saying: The invitation to smoke in the building — and especially at the soda fountain — was not consistent with our mission of selling health care products," said Downing.

In a regular pharmacy, the decision in favor of a smoke-free building and even to discontinue selling tobacco products, might go virtually unnoticed.

A case in point is Flynn's Pharmacy at 173 Elm St. in Pittsfield.

"We celebrated the Great American Smoke-Out three years ago by banning the sale of tobacco products," said Christopher Flynn, co-owner, last night.

There were a few complaints, he said, none serious, and one customer who usually bought cigarettes at the pharmacy congratulated him.

The difference is that Flynn's does not have a soda fountain.

In contrast, the McClelland front-of-the-store soda fountain with its nine stools, 16-cent Cokes and offerings of Haagen-Daz ice cream, is considered an institution. It opens at 6:30 a.m., usually to a line of waiting customers, and caters to regulars for the rest of the day.

TOBACCO, continued on B5

Drugstore going 'smoke free'

■ TOBACCO, from B1

"Here, everybody who's anybody in town gathers," Eagle columnist Elizabeth Field wrote in 1990.

Downing said, however, that despite Field's tribute, business at the soda fountain has diminished.

Patrons are older, he said. The fountain has not held its appeal for younger people, for mothers bringing their children in for an ice cream cone or even for the after-school crowd that gathered at 3 each afternoon.

Downing said he thinks a good part of the reason is that younger customers find smoking objectionable and stay away.

"There's a consciousness about smoking today," he said. "I can't afford to ignore it, and I can't afford to lose those younger people. They are our future customers."

He said he is planning extensive advertising in December to explain the ban on smoking. He is also investigating the availability of smoking clinics and educational materials about the harmful effects of tobacco and ways to kick the habit.

Strongly supporting the decision is his son, Patrick Downing, who joined the business two years ago.

Inconsistency

The younger Downing said he is not against smoking per se, "but I am against smoking in this particular business establishment because it is inconsistent with what we do."

He said he has repeatedly expressed his views on the subject to his father since he joined the business.

A number of employees share his opinion, he said. Nevertheless, he and his father agreed the decision will be tough on a few of them who are smokers and whose employment predates Downing's ownership.

The store, open seven days a week, maintains a payroll of 52, 42 of them full time.

Unlike some buildings that are smoke free, there will not be a special area set aside for smokers, the Downings said.

Patrick Downing said his father will take the brunt of the expected discontent from longtime smoking customers.

"That's because I open the doors at 6:30 a.m.," said the senior Downing. "These are the regulars who want a cigarette with their coffee."

"I don't want to turn people away, but this has to be a drugstore for everyone."

Effort gets under way in Lee to create trust to preserve land

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff 11-22-91

LEE — There's an effort under way in town to establish a local land trust that would preserve open space.

"There's a Community Development Corp. in town whose stated purpose is to attract industry, and it's extremely important to have a counterbalancing land trust to preserve open space," said Deidre M. Consolati, a vocal proponent of the land trust.

Consolati urged the Selectmen to appoint Timothy Gray of Bradley Street to serve on a town land trust, which would be independent of town government. So far, he is the only official member, and he said recently that nothing "concrete" has been done yet.

Some beautiful space

"Nothing's been done simply because it isn't formed yet," he said. "One person doesn't make a land trust."

There is some beautiful open space in town that should be preserved, he said.

George S. Wislocki, director of the Berkshire Natural Resources Council, said there is strong potential for a land trust in Lee.

Wislocki's organization operates the Berkshire County Land Trust and provides advice and assistance to 10 other local land trusts around the county. They are all part of an umbrella organization called the Berkshire County Land Trust Alliance. Together they have protected about 7,000 acres around the county, Wislocki said. Lee could easily add more pristine acreage, he said.

'Wonderful lands'

"Lee is a town that's come of age and has some wonderful lands," he said. "There's no doubt a land trust would work there."

He said it takes about a year for a land trust to get established, and he has met with Gray to provide him with some start-up information.

The land trusts arrange for property owners to convey their land as open space or enter into conservation restriction agreements. The property owner gets a tax break, and the town gets a gift of permanent open space for its vistas.

In addition to the 7,000 acres protected by the Berkshire County Land Trust Alliance, another 3,000 is held by the Trustees of Reservations and the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

Consolati said she is surprised that the town's Planning Board has not already taken steps toward preserving open space in town, since a Planning Board study several years ago showed that townspeople considered open space preservation a priority.

Planning Board Chairman Robert Birch conceded that the matter should indeed be addressed.

Industrial park bylaw

But currently, his board is preoccupied with drafting a new town bylaw that will allow development of an industrial park off Route 102.

Selectman Martin H. Deely said the idea may be slow in getting off the ground in Lee because there hasn't been a piece of property at risk to galvanize the public into action. Also, the town already has a lot of state-owned, protected parkland in October Mountain State Forest, he said.

Consolati, however, was prompted to push the issue forth after town officials began considering development of a municipal golf course on a 124-acre tract off Fairview Street. Such a piece of property would be an ideal target for a land trust, she said.

Eagle 11-20-91

Lee board opposes dissolution of union

LEE — By a vote of 3-2, the School Committee last night went on record in opposition to the dissolution of the Lee-Otis-Tyringham Superintendency Union.

The matter arose because one of the member towns, Otis, has approved the formation of a regional school district with its neighbor, Sandisfield, and wishes to leave the union, said Superintendent of Schools Henry T. Zukowski.

Zukowski said that if two of the three member towns vote to "let Otis out," then the question of dissolution of the union proceeds to its nine-member governing committee. Three members of each town's school committee sit as members of the larger body, he said.

Tyringham's school board will consider the question of dissolution at 7:30 p.m. tomorrow at Town Hall. The Otis committee will vote Monday.

Job in doubt

Zukowski said he has not taken any position on the matter because the future of his job would be in some doubt if the union is dissolved.

"I have kept away from it right from the start, and it will be that way on Thursday and Monday," he said. "I appreciate very much the fact that all the committee chairmen involved have not asked my opinion on this because they realize that I am in a difficult position."

If the superintendency union's School Committee votes to dissolve the union, then a comprehensive education plan would be submitted by the remaining towns to the state Department of Education for approval, Zukowski said.

"It isn't an overnight deal, but it could be expedited," he said of the process that would follow dissolution.

In a telephone interview after the vote last night, Zukowski said School Committee Chairman Edward M. Lahey and members Carol LeProvost and Judith Olds voted against dissolving the union. Members Gary Norton and David K. Chivers voted in favor.

Eagle 11-22-91

Lee High lists students on honor roll

LEE — Richard T. Salinetti, principal of Lee High School, has announced that 111 students, or 36 percent of a total enrollment of 308, were named to the honor roll for the first quarter.

Of the total, 52 attained high honors and 59 attained honors.

To be named to the high honor roll, a student must earn a grade average of 90 or above, with no grade below 80; and for the honor roll, a grade average between 85 and 90, with none lower than 75.

High honors

Grade 12: Jodi Abderhalden, Rebecca Allen, Aaron Brighenti, Lisa Burrell, Stephanie Castronova, Cathleen Cinella, Sheila Collins, Renee Cory, Shawn Gleason, Amanda Lahey, Travis Roberts, Craig Simmons, April Slater, Heather Stanard and Richard Wescott.

Grade 11: Cherri Carter, Jonathan Clark, Sam Fix, Gwendolyn Goehring, Mark Grady, William Martin, Felicia Piacentino, Michael Puntin, William Roche, Kelsey Scarpa and Karen Scheurer.

Grade 10: Rodney Bragdon, Lee Brighenti, Sara Burtt, Heidi Clauss, Jenny Cory, Nathan Jones, Andrea Koenig, Kasey McManmon, Kelly Palmer, Jennifer Pixley, Joshua Shaw, Allison Skowron, Rebecca Stanard and Elisheva Verdi.

Grade 9: Daniel Arndt, Sarah Blaisdell, Jason Bush, Brian Eccher, Faith Lorance, Jason Marchant, Cherrie Nolan, Sharon Taillefer, Christopher Tisdale, Mark Walker, Sarah Walsh and Stephanie Wescott.

Honors

Grade 12: Paul Consolati, Michael Curtin, Rod Hunsicker, Nathan Lawton, Betsy Loring, Scott Martin, Scott Methe, Ralph Olds, Naomi Petell, Lisa Pyenson, Kathleen Salinetti, Marcus Scarafoni, Elizabeth Scheurer, Rebecca Soules, Nadine Souza, Bethany Sparks, Jennifer Stanard, Jason Wampler, Heather Wells and Joshua Young.

Grade 11: Patrick Consolati, Peggi-Jeanne Flood, Elena LaGrant, Liliana Lopez, Jason Loso, Gabriel Naventi, Robert Piccolo, Paula Pixley, Stacy Rollins, Rebecca Sutton, Missy Vilot and Fabio Villar.

Grade 10: Staci Barrett, James Braim, David Cornellier, John Cysz, Amy DiMario, Chris Eccher, Dennis Griffin, Melanie North, Jeffrey Puleri, Anthea Taylor, Danica Vaninetti and Harold Viliar.

Grade 9: Michael Belba, Christine Cinella, Jonathan Cohen, Kristen Coty, Lori Curtin, Mark Drury, Joseph Impoco, Debra Methe, Kelly O'Brien, Matthew Roche, Megan Sparks, Alyson Truden, Todd Tyer and Denise Walker.

Eagle 11-20-91

Schmidinger twins also make top 10

BEAVER CREEK, Colo. — Heidi Voelker of Pittsfield, Mass., finished third and her U.S. Ski Team teammates Kim and Krista Schmidinger of Lee, Mass., also earned top-10 finishes yesterday in an international slalom ski race at Beaver Creek ski resort.

Julie Parisien of Auburn, Maine, won the two-run slalom race with a combined time of 1 minute, 19.62 seconds after first-run leader Pernila Wiberg of Sweden fell on her second run. Diann Roffe of Potsdam, N.Y., was second in 1:20.83, and Voelker was third in 1:20.99. Voelker had placed 10th in a giant slalom race at Beaver Creek on Monday.

Kim Schmidinger, coming back from knee surgery that sidelined her almost all of last ski season, marked her return to competition by placing seventh in 1:22.46, while her twin sister, Krista, was 10th in 1:25.20.

The U.S. women's team now takes a short break before World Cup competition begins Nov. 30 in Italy.

Record 11-22-91

Unemployment Comes Home For Holidays

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE — Donny Goodrich of Lee worked for ECH Will (formerly Clark-Aiken) for 36 years.

September 28 he was laid off.

Since last summer about 70 employees of the Water Street paper converting machinery manufacturing plant have met the same fate.

Forty of them got together Tuesday at Lee Lanes to listen to a federally-funded team talk about retraining and getting back into the job market.

A few who were there hadn't been laid off yet. But they expected to be.

Goodrich is 58. He's started collecting unemployment. He isn't sure what's he's going to do. He's married. The kids are grown. He owns his house. That's the good news.

But what about health insurance? The out-of-work crowd can get it all right, through an extended state plan. What they were getting free before will now cost a family at about $500 a month.

"I was a hacksaw operator," said Goodrich, whom some of the men call "the mayor of Lee." A buddy said, "That guy gave his whole life to this company."

Goodrich said, "A little while ago I took a lower labor

Unemployment, A12

PHOTO BY THELMA O'BRIEN

Laid off workers from the ECL Will plant in Lee listening to a federal "rapid response team" talk about getting back in the job market.

Unemployment Comes Home

11-22-91

Continued from A1

rating for less stress and I guess they laid me off because there was nobody left to bump with my labor rating."

John Eisenhour, executive vice president of the company, which bought out Clark-Aiken in November 1989, declined to say how many workers had been laid off. He said the company currently employs approximately 70 people, but he couldn't remember how many workers there were when Will took over.

The layoffs, he said "are a response to a weak market."

Asked why someone with such seniority was chosen, he said that the formula for who gets laid off is not always based on seniority.

"When you go through a layoff," Eisenhour said, "you eliminate jobs and the people are kind of the resultant."

Some of the men were reluctant to give their names.

"I'd been there 13 years in engineering and sales and service. Then one day in June...."

Single mom Jean Kergaravat of Lenox worked at the plant 17 years.

"I'm just trying to refocus," she said, "trying to organize my life, get out there and make a living."

She said she knew layoffs were going on of course but she somehow didn't think it would happen to her.

"I saw the shop steward coming and I just said, 'No, you don't want me.'"

Beverly Keefer joined the company in 1959.

"They told me I had 10 minutes to pick up my belongings and leave. And then they escorted me to the door. It just hurt. It's like when you're past 60 you're ready for the Dumpster."

Myron Bliss worked there for 18 years.

Ed Williams has put in 15 years. He has two kids, 13 and 15 and he and his wife own their own home. "Yeah, but not for long," someone sort of joked.

Gerald Crane of Housatonic, a welder, has been at the plant 32 years.

"They don't want old people — too many benefits," he said.

Stephen Raymond and Louise Rose, a so-called "rapid response team" talked to the group of what they referred to as "dislocated workers."

The team's charge is to help the unemployed with funds that originate with the federal Department of Labor and then travel through the state Industrial Services Program which sends them to something called the Donahue Institute at UMass, Amherst.

A handout listed options for the unemployed and ways in which this rapid response team could help with adult education, job exploration, job search skills, job counseling, entrepreneurial training, job training and survival skills.

Raymond told the group, "I know what you're going through. I've been there...but that was 25 years ago. Times are different now. The labor market's tough. This is not a piece of cake. You've got to have an edge."

He said there were limits to what the team could accomplish, that they couldn't train people to be brain surgeons, that programs had to be "vocationally-oriented," and that those choosing to go to school couldn't major in "underwater basket weaving," but had to look for appropriate courses in such subjects as welding and computers.

Rose told the audience they "were a good bunch to work with, and that she was impressed with "their caring and helping each other out."

She also reminded them that this was "middle America, you don't have to be below the poverty line to get involved."

Rose will be at Lee's Airoldi Building two days a week starting Tuesday, November 26, to counsel the unemployed. She emphasized that those interested needed to make appointments. She may be reached most of the time at 413 743-7908.

Eagle 11-24-91

Lee music students to give winter concert

LEE — Lee Central School's jazz ensemble, concert band, 6th grade band and beginner band will present a winter concert on Tuesday, Dec. 17, at 7:30 p.m. in the school's cafeteria, according to Jill Mongeau, instrumental music teacher.

The event is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be served.

Mongeau has also announced that seven former Lee students have joined the University of Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble, which will present its first concert on Thursday, Dec. 12, at 7:30 p.m. at the university's Bowker Auditorium.

The local members are Naomi Petell, flute; Jonathan Cohen, trombone; Jimmy Moffatt, saxophone; Joseph Dinan, tenor saxophone; Jesse Horsford, baritone; Peter Wise, percussion, and Sean Burtt, trombone.

In down-home Lee, merchants hang on

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

11-25-91

LEE — The hometown folks in Lee don't much like it when visitors describe their unpretentious town as the one at Exit 2 on the Massachusetts Turnpike — the one you drive through to get to the tourist meccas of Lenox and Stockbridge.

But the very characteristics that don't make Lee a major destination — its industry, its working-class orientation, its basic mom and pop businesses — may have saved it from the hard knocks that the recession has given other parts of the county, local business owners say.

Many of them say business is much slower than it was during the boom of the mid- to late 1980s, a comparison that most say is not realistic anyway. But merchants say they are holding on with their regular customers, their roots in the community and the self-contained character of the town.

Although some businesses in towns like Lenox and Stockbridge rely more heavily on tourism, Lee merchants depend on residents and on each other, said Daniel J. Holmes, owner of The Penny Saver, a free weekly advertising circular.

Winter anxiety

Holmes, who lives in Lenox, said Lee merchants are anxious about the coming of another winter, but they are buffered somewhat from economic swings by their longevity and experience and the absence, for the most part, of big start-up costs.

"I've heard a number of them saying, 'Thank God I'm not starting off new, because I don't think I could make it,'" he said. "They're not doing great, but

LEE STORES, continued on B3

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Vic's Seafood in Lee, owned by Nina Hryckvich, is among the small businesses there that are weathering the economic storm.

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Merchants on Main Street in Lee report business is much slower, but they are holding their own nonetheless.

Lee merchants holding on

Eagle 11-25-91

■ LEE STORES, from A1

they're doing well enough to survive."

Since business turnover is infrequent in Lee, the longtime owners are experienced at responding to economic swings, he said.

At The Penny Saver, he has noticed that businesses continue to advertise but with smaller ads and maybe not each week.

Still, he said, "It can't get a lot worse."

Fewer walk-ins

Sally Wilcox, who with her husband, Douglas, owns Paperdilly, an office supply shop on Main Street, said the 11-year-old business relies mostly on business accounts, which have remained steady. Walk-in traffic, however, has dropped off considerably, she said.

At The Upstairs Basement on Main Street, a secondhand consignment shop owned by Helen Larson for 20 years, the economic slump has resulted in increased activity.

More people are trying to make some money with their used clothing, she said, and she is picking up about a dozen new consignees each week, compared with two or three per week in past years.

New consignees end up buying things when they come in with articles to sell, she said. Also, shopping for secondhand bargains is increasingly popular. As a result, she said, "we're jammed to the rafters" with clothing.

Larson has limited the number of items she'll accept to 10 per consignee and will also stop accepting winter items tomorrow, earlier than in past years.

Back on the road

Richard F. Shields of Dresser Hull Co., which sells lumber and building materials, said business there is certainly below what it was several years ago. But he said that, in the past month, business has been "steady," with more of his delivery trucks on the road.

He said he doesn't even compare current business to 1988 and 1989, when "everything was through the roof" and he was working 11- and 12-hour days.

"Those years were crazy and had to be above the norm. It had to reach a correction somewhere, which it has, via recession," said Shields. "It will never be the same as it was."

some ways it's more comfortable. I like it better. It has all the bases covered, plus the extras."

Indeed, a person can live in Lee and not have to leave for much of anything.

On Main Street a shopper can get a 16-cent cup of coffee and a prescription filled at McClelland Drug Store; just about anything for children, home or hobby at H.A. Johansson; a meal of corned beef and cabbage on Thursdays at Joe's Diner; groceries at Price Chopper; shoes and clothing at Ben's, Jack's, Zabian's or the Towne Shoppe; a drink or a meal at the Morgan House.

There's Chinese food at The Red Apple and four pizza restaurants to choose from. There are four banks, three churches and a library within a 1,000-foot radius of downtown. There are a half-dozen convenience stores, a used-car dealer, several package stores and a half-dozen places to get a car fixed.

Hardware, paint and household items can be had at two hardware stores. One can get office supplies, flowers, haircuts, fresh seafood as well as the services of lawyers, accountants and insurance agents.

Many choices

In East Lee, the Water Street market sells fresh produce, meat and bakery goods. There's a bowling alley, a veterinarian, dentists and medical clinics. And there are antiques dealers around town, plus some motels and bed-and-breakfasts.

At Vic's Seafood, a small fish shop on Main Street, Victor and Nina Hryckvich of Sandisfield are surviving the slump.

The store opened seven years ago and has a regular clientele, said Nina Hryckvich.

Her husband fishes off Point Judith, R.I., three days a week to supply the shop, which is open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Because more people are health-conscious, they want to keep eating fish, she said.

"We're not making as much money, since we're trying to hold our prices down," she said. "But we're holding our own."

'People shop here because they always have.'

Vic's has a few wholesale accounts, such as Taft Farms in Great Barrington and a few restaurants, but walk-in customers provide the most business, Hryckvich said.

Day to day

At Lee Hardware, which Joseph J. Scapin recently bought from his father-in-law, William Derrick, Scapin said a lot of contractors are working from day to day, or week to week. They don't have jobs lined up months in advance.

Business at the store is fairly consistent now, he said, adding that many homeowners are doing their own work, such as painting. Paint sales are up, he said.

Shields of Dresser Hull also said paint sales are up.

Shields said many of Lee's businesses are "institutions" with reputations that come from years of smart ownership by decent people. And the diversity of services and goods on Main Street makes the town like a mini-mall but with better personality, he said.

Mary K. Bradbury, president of the Lee Chamber of Commerce and owner of The Learning Center in South Lee, said the town has remained economically stable largely because of a strong industrial base.

Lee Lime Corp., Kimberly-Clark Corp., Mead Corp. Specialty Paper Division and Country Curtains have national and international markets that make them less susceptible to local economic problems, she said.

"And this is pretty much a town with generations of people. There's not a lot of transients," Bradbury said. "People shop here because they always have. We just don't depend on outside fluctuations and the tourist season."

Eagle 11-26-91

Route 102 surface lumpy because work isn't done

LEE — Some inquiring drivers who travel Route 102 between South Lee and Stockbridge want to know why what looks like a newly paved road gives such a bumpy ride.

The reason is that the job isn't done yet and won't be for another year or so, said Ross B. Dindio, district engineer for the state Department of Public Works' office in Lenox.

He said the fresh blacktop in the road is merely the preliminary step in the $1.1 million paving job on the section of road that stretches from Lee to Stockbridge.

Dindio said work on the first coat of asphalt was done to fill in wheel ruts. In some places another binder coat was applied. When work resumes in the spring, the final paving will be done and the road will be smooth.

"We don't build bumpy roads," said Dindio, who said his office has received some calls from people wanting to know about the road. "You don't use taxpayers' money to fix the road and then have them say it's worse than it was to begin with."

town topics

Advocate 11-26-91

Breaking up hard to do for Otis

Breaking up the 76-year-old bond between Lee, Tyringham and Otis through the Lee School Union is proving to be easier said than done for Otis.

Although Otis voted earlier this month to leave the union to form a regional school district with Sandisfield, the Lee and Tyringham school committees voted last week against the dissolution. It would normally require two of the three towns approving the dissolution for it to occur.

The short-term solution, officials say, is to have state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, sponsor legislation enabling Otis to part company with its northern neighbors to form a new regional school district to the south.

In the long term, however, some Otis residents say there is resentment against the two school committees. The resentment may manifest itself in parents deciding to send their high school students to other schools such as Monument Mountain Regional High School instead of Lee High School where almost all Otis teens have gone for years.

If that occurs, the school union would not only lose Otis's contribution of about $20,000 for the superintendent's office, but also money Otis would pay for tuition students into the Lee school.

At Rossi's Restaurant on Main Street, general manager Alan M. Weinman of Stockbridge, who used to own The Restaurant in Lenox, is impressed with Lee.

'No pretense'

"There's no pretense," he said. "Not that other towns are based on pretense, but there's a certain amount required to attract tourists as far as extra polish and superfluous ornamentation.... In

42

New rules in Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge? Advocate 11-26-91

Plan would ban smoking in stores, workplace

By Erik Bruun

Several Berkshire boards of health are considering adopting new regulations that would prohibit smoking in almost all stores, restaurants and public buildings in their communities.

Although the proposal originated from three south county towns, Tri-town Sanitarian Peter J. Kolodziej says other Berkshire towns may follow suit. Kolodziej is the health agent for Stockbridge, Lenox and Lee.

"If everybody follows the same guidelines it will be easier to enforce," Kolodziej says. "What we're finding is that a lot of businesses are willing to go along with it but they don't want to do it alone. It would be much easier if Pittsfield, Great Barrington and the north county towns did it also."

In Williamstown, health agent M. Michael Muzyka says the town already adopted relatively prohibitive smoking regulations five years ago and they have been widely accepted.

"We've come a long way," Muzyka says. "We have good compliance in town...I don't know whether restaurants would accept everything (Koldziej) wants to do."

The decision to even ponder the new regulations comes at a time when many businesses have voluntarily either prohibited smoking from their establishments or have placed severe restrictions.

Continued on page 10

Smoking ban considered

Continued from page 1

To further encourage the trend, Kolodziej has started distributing plaques to stores that have declared themselves to be smoke-free. The first plaque went to McClelland's Drug Store in Lee.

Storeowner Francis Downing is quick to dismiss the recognition and publicity surrounding the decision saying it was long overdue because his business is meant to be a purveyor of good health.

Nevertheless, Kolodziej says the McClelland prohibition, which goes into effect Jan. 1, marks a symbolic victory for advocates of non-smoking.

"They used to line up the cigarettes," Kolodziej says. "There would be a cloud smoke of when you walked in. It's a big step for him to ban smoking."

But if the boards of health in his towns approve the five pages of proposed regulations, businesses will no longer have a choice in the matter.

"We'd like to see smoking banned entirely," says Lee Health Chairman Dr. Charles W. Stratton. "It may be difficult to start but with time it's going to get easier, especially if all the towns decide to do it."

In some respects, Kolodziej says he and other officals are merely following popular demand.

"The pressure is greater each year for us to do something," Koldoziej says. "It's coming from the citizens, employees, patrons, just about everybody."

If the regulations are implemented, Kolodziej says his agency would work with restaurants to try to phase the ban in. He says restaurants could designate increasingly small areas in the restaurant as smoking areas until there is none left except in very restricted areas.

While some restaurant owners have said they would be willing to ban smoking, Koldziej says that many are worried about the impact on business. With the economy in a recession, he adds, restaurants are particularly sensitive to any loss in revenues.

Kolodziej says he is working with other Berkshire boards of health through the Berkshire County Board of Health Association to try to convince other towns to adopt similar regulations.

The specific regulation calls for banning smoking in all museums, libraries, nursing homes, public transit facilities, and retail stores (with the exception of retail tobacco stores). Also, it would become illegal for people to smoke in any workplace except in specifically designated smoking areas. Although many companies already have no-smoking policies, the regulations would require that all companies comply.

Violations would result in a fine of between $20 and $50 for the smoker, and up to $200 for each day that a proprietor fails to comply with the regulation.

Further, the bylaw sould ban the use of cigarette vending machines, prohibit the sale of cigarettes to people under 18 and would prohibit stores from selling cigarettes for substantially reduced prices.

Stances soften in Lenox school deba

Even if Lenox residents approve a multimillion-dollar school building project, they can expect a long wait before the state hands over money for the project, and construction begins.

Saddled with a growing line of unfulfilled school projects throughout the commonwealth, the Department of Education expects to receive 72 building proposals that would require an allocation of $92 million to fund all of them this year.

In the last four years, state allocations have ranged from $8.9 million to about $25 million.

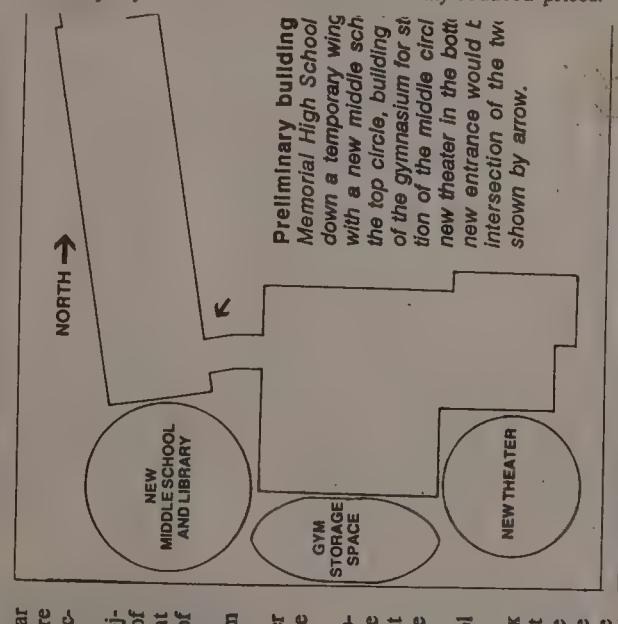
"It's pretty grim right now," says information officer Marie Fricker. "There isn't enough money to pay for the projects right now and the line is getting longer."

What that means for Lenox is that even if the town approves the proposed two-pronged project and the state agrees to reimburse the town for 64 percent of the costs, it would most likely be at least a couple of years before the money is released to begin construction.

"It's going to be a long-term project," Lenox School Building Committee Chairman Wayne Lemanski says.

In the case of replacing the temporary wing at Lenox Memorial High School, Lenox School Superintendent Roland Miller says the 20-year-old wing addition will have to remain until the new proposed wing for the middle school is built. He adds that it is questionable how long the temporary wing, which is built on 10 trailer platforms, will last.

School officials plan to meet with the Lenox Selectmen, Finance Committee and others for a presentation tonight (Tuesday) to discuss plans for the school building project.



Several selectmen and finance committee members have expressed reluctance to go ahead with the project because of the burden it would place on taxpayers. The pre-

Advocate Federal agency arrives in Lee for 11-26-91 out-of-work south county residents

For the first time in recent memory, south county will have a federally-funded agency helping laid off workers find new jobs starting today (Tuesday).

The Western Massachusetts Response Team will set up shop at the Airoldi Building in Lee to counsel unemployed workers in the town and surrounding communities.

Although layoffs of about 50 workers at ECH Will Manufacturing Co. prompted the U.S Department of Labor to start a Lee office, manager Steve Raymond says counselors will work with other unemployed people to offer training courses, job counseling and placement services.

"We try to help people find other jobs," Raymond says. "We think there are opportunities here and we think we can help."

The office will be staffed by two counselors on Tuesdays and one in-take person, Raymond says. The agency will not be charged rent by the town.

The agency already assists people in north and central county in Pittsfield and Adams locations but up until now south county has remained relatively unscathed by significant unemployment problems.

Despite widespread problems with the economy in western Massachusetts, Raymond says jobs can be found by displaced workers. The difficulty, however, for many workers who have spent years learning skills that may be coming obsolete is switching to entirely new jobs requiring different skills.

Generally speaking, Raymond says that job opportunities can be found in south county in the medical field, in computers and with computerized numerically controlled machines. He concedes that it will not always be easy for people to find new jobs in the county which has seen the unemployment rate hover around 10 percent for several months.

"At first it may seem like losing your job is a shock and this is the end of the world," Raymond says. "It's not good and we're not saying it is, but what we are saying is you can turn it into an opportunity. It really is an opportunity if you take advantage of what is out there. You can improve your training and pick yourself up."

In Berkshire County, however, Raymond adds that the number of job training courses is limited to Berkshire Community College and a few places in Springfield and northwest Connecticut. Thus, he says his agency has started new courses in Northampton.

"We're doing what we can. We don't have a lot of resources ourselves," he says.

Three years ago there was no Western Massachusetts Response Team for unemployed workers because there were so few people out of work. But times have changed and now the team works in all four of the state's western counties. "It's not very good anywhere," Raymond says.

He says the office will remain staffed on a part-time basis in Lee until everybody who needs assistance is given help. Having met with ECH Will managers and laid off workers last week, Raymond says several appointments have already been made. "So far everybody has been very friendly and helpful," he says.

11-26-91

talk of the towns

The Phantom of the Opera at Lenox Town Hall

Lenox Town Hall will be just like the old days in mor ways than one this Saturday. Marking the second silent movie at the Lenox Town Hall this fall, *The Phantom of the Opera* starring Lon Chaney will be shown Saturday at 8 p.m.

Lenox musician Mike Schiffer will perform accompanying music to the silent movie on the piano.

Many years ago, Town Hall doubled as a recreation center. As part of the town's effort to rekindle interst in the historic building a series of events have been held in the auditorium this fall.

Committee Chairman Richard Houdek, who is a SOUTH ADVOCATE columnist, has spearheaded the effort and arranged for the showing of Charlie Chaplin's *Gold Rush*. "If there ever is a profit, the money will go into the Town Hall Arts Center fund" for new equipment, Houdek says.

Reading Mozart's letters

Wolfgang Mozart was almost as prolific at letter-writing as he was at composing. Clayton resident Jon Swan has adapted for staged readings a number of Mozart's letters in a production, "Mostly Wolfgang: Looking for work, Falling in Love" which will be performed by the Mixed Stage theater company of Great Barrington.

It includes letters Mozart wrote or received from his relatives in the years 1777 to 1779, when the 21 year old musician was looking for a court position. Swan notes to parents that "if this were a movie, it would probably be rated PG," because of Mozart's bawdy sense of humor.

The play will be presented Nov. 29 and 30 and Dec. 1, 13, 14 and 15. For information and reservations call (413) 528-2320.

Advocate 11-26-91

Good cooking habits make for better food

The Tri-town Health Department's effort to promote sanitary cooking conditions in south county restaurants, took another step forward last week as 15 restaurant workers graduated from an eight-week class on food service prepartation.

Taught by Nancy Simonds-Ruderman, the students learned basic sanitary practices to ensure the production of safe food in their establishments. In all, more than 60 people have now gone through the course sponsored by the health agency in the last two years. The department covers Lee, Lenox and Stockbridge.

"We want to make sure that people in Berkshire County are eating good, wholesome food when they eat out," says assistant health agent Max Bookless. "All we can do now is make sure they've got the right equipment and stuff. You don't know if they know how to prepare the meals safely."

He adds, however, that the boards of health in the three towns may make it mandatory for restaurants to have at least one person on staff who has gone through the program.

LENOX
Children's Center

Affordable quality day-care for toddlers, preschoolers and school-aged children.
15 months–10 years. 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m.
Limited openings in the toddler and preschool classes.
Ongoing programs and classes for the school-aged child – some openings.
Reasonable rates and some scholarships
Licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Staffed by professional early childhood specialists
Call: Carol Stidger, Director
LENOX CHILDREN'S CENTER
9 School St., Lenox, Mass. (413) 637-0321
A non-profit corporation

Several sides of Bach

Several sides of another composer, Johann Sebastian Bach, will be the focus of the season premier concert of the Berkshoire Bach Society. The Society is also sponsoring a free dress rehearsal for students to introduce young people to the composer.

The program for both is "designed to illustrate the interplay of the sacred and the secular in Bach's cantatas," according to Bach Society chairman Simon

44

Otis School Committee asks Lee to reconsider decision on union

11-28-91

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

OTIS — The Otis School Committee has asked the Lee School Committee to reconsider its refusal to dissolve the three-town school union in which Otis is a member.

"Our desire is to resolve it locally," said School Committee Chairman Denise R. Gould. "From our perspective it will leave the best relationship intact."

Lee School Committee Chairman Edward M. Lahey, who attended what he called a "very amicable" meeting in Otis on Monday night, said the Lee board might reconsider.

'Not hard-nosed'

"It certainly is an option," said Lahey. "We're not hard-nosed about anything. . . . It never hurts to look a second time."

Regardless of what happens in Lee, however, Otis will proceed with plans to form its own district with Sandisfield as of Jan. 1, said Gould. If Lee officials stand by their original vote, he said, Otis will seek legislative approval to withdraw from Superintendency Union 29, which includes Tyringham, Otis and Lee.

As was expected, the Otis School Committee voted unanimously Monday night to dissolve Superintendency Union 29 with Lee and Tyringham. But Otis has been outvoted by Lee and Tyringham, whose boards want the union to remain intact.

As a member of the school union since 1915, Otis shares with the other towns a single school superintendent, a central office staff and related administrative costs. Otis' share of those costs is about $23,000, which is 21 percent of Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski's administrative budget, but only one-half of 1 percent of the total Lee School Department budget. That money would be lost if Otis left the union.

While Gould said she thinks money is an important issue in Lee's reluctance, Lahey said money is hardly the point.

"You could find that money in a pipe," he said, and no teachers would ever be laid off to recoup that cost.

Maintain good relations

Lee simply wants to maintain the good relations that Zukowski has forged over the years with Otis and its students, Gould said.

"We have a responsibility to our community to look to the best interests of our community," Lahey said. "Just because he's Henry he's built a strong relationship among the three towns and works hard at it. There's no way we could maintain that. He'd no longer be superintendent out there [in Otis]."

Otis and Sandisfield expect to reap major educational economic benefits from regionalizing. The towns will share some elementary school facilities and staff, and they will plan for future construction of a new regional school.

Most Otis middle and high school students will continue to attend school in Lee as they do now, administrators say.

Zukowski, who attended the Monday meeting also, said he believes Otis parents will continue to send their children to Lee schools despite Lee's position on dissolving the union.

The Lee School Committee will hold its next meeting Dec. 3.

Record 11-29-91

Century Cable Begins Campaign To Benefit Needy Children in Area

LEE—Philip Hopkins, Century Berkshire Cable General Manager, announced the kick-off of a holiday campaign designed to benefit the needy children in Lee, Lenox, Great Barrington, Housatonic, Stockbridge and surrounding communities.

Century Berkshire Cable will be working with Community Services in Great Barrington and the Lee Police Department to Distribute the toys again this year. Century's Holiday Toy Drive began on November 11, 1991 and will continue right up to Christmas

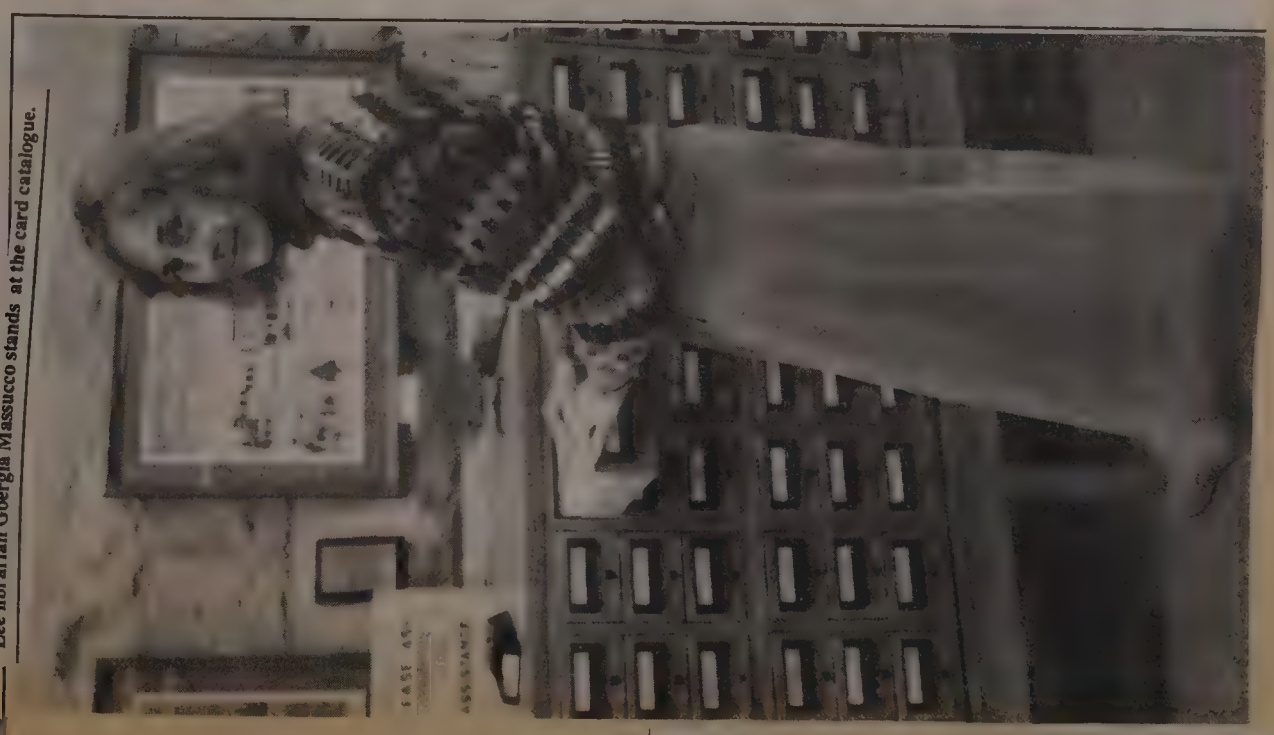
Community Services, a non-profit organization serving South Berkshire, is also looking for clothes and food at this holiday time of year. Community Services, located on Castle Street in Great Barrington, helps people in times of need, as well as helping to remove that need.

Anyone wishing to donate a toy to Century's Holiday Toy Drive may do so by dropping them off at Century's office in East Lee or by contacting the office at 243-0676 to arrange a pick-up.

Record

November 29, 1991

(Ssh!) Town Libraries,



Lee librarian Goergia Massucco stands at the card catalogue.

Our Best-Kept Secre

45

11-29-91

Lee

¶ Ninety-eight percent town funded. Fiscal year 1988 appropriation $112,700; 1992 $122,000. Other funding sources from endowment and grants. Library opened in 1908.

¶ Collections include 50,000 titles and about 100 magazine and newspaper subscriptions.

¶ Population 5,800.

¶ Membership free to Massachusetts residents.

¶ Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Wednesday, Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Closed Sunday.

Georgia Massucco, librarian since 1987, feels charged with making the library "more technically proficient.

"We are a small library with a general fiction and non-fiction collection of, I think,, 50,000 books but the inventory is unclear."

Massucco said a five-year plan is aimed at organizing the collection and the clerical records, which she indicated have been kept whimsically over the years.

"There's no way to determine how many cardholders there are because all the old cards have been kept," she said by way of illustration. "I'd say we have 4,000 people currently registered, but I measured the drawers and I'd say there are probably 10,000 cards."

Yet, a visit to the library on Main Street, an imposing structure partially faced with Lee marble, belies the scholarly chaos she describes. An accommodating desk staff, a pleasant reading room with easy chairs and a sense of service — with swivel shelves, one containing, the sign says "oldies but goodies" and new selections easily available for browsing and borrowing — contribute to the ease and comfort of the place.

Massucco took over the library from in 1987. Her predecessor had been there for 52 years and, according to Massucco, remains a great help.

Massucco came to Lee in 1987 from West Springfield where she had been children's librarian and a member of the library staff there for 22 years.

As a former children's librarian she says the Lee collection is nice "but not as good as it could be." She has run children's programs, but right now does not. She hopes to start up soon with story times and other activities.

Among the most valuable items in the library are local historical documents which are locked up but accessible upon request.

"We have one of the most comprehensive collections of *The Valley Gleaner* or *The Berkshire Gleaner* (a local newspaper), dating from 1857 to

Continued on B9

e Record, Friday, November 29, 1991

Libraries–C

Continued from B 1

1944. I think we're only missing 1919 and 1921."

Massucco also hopes to do something about the slim pickings in the reference room where the shelves are all but empty.

"The people here in town are very proud of their library," she said. "What's very important is our desk personnel who are very helpful."

Massucco is paid $27,000.

By Thelma O'Brien

11-29-91

Going to a public library is a little bit like visiting a nice relative: it's familiar, welcoming, nourishing and free.

Four local libraries meet those standards although there are one or two differences among them: Lenox, besides books, has puzzles, Great Barrington, puppets; Stockbridge has Jonathan Edwards' desk, Lee, the 87-year run of *The Berkshire (Valley) Gleaner.*

Membership policies may vary. Mason Library in Great Barrington, for example, has the stiffest use policy relating to non-residents, who must show proof of address or pay a $20 refundable deposit to borrow books.

Stockbridge, Lenox and Lee offer free memberships to any regional resident, and under certain circumstances Lenox charges temporary residents a $10 refundable deposit.

Maintaining these quite amazing institutions, which supply the 22,000 residents of these communities with at least 65,000 titles and approximately 200 periodicals, preoccupies most of the people who have anything to do with running them.

Lenox librarian Denis Lesieur says the last book he read was an accounting manual, a wry truth that resonates for his three librarian colleagues in these towns.

Surrounded by books, which is what brought them into the business in the first place, and other *accoutrements* of a contemplative profession, these long-time and modestly-paid book lovers are spending at least as much time hustling money for boilers and roofs as they are curled up with Swinburne or Steele.

Nevertheless, and in spite of their budget responsibilities, they manage to run four unique resources, supplying books, newspaper, magazines and reference works, as well as art exhibits, children's story hours, literacy programs, audio and video tapes and simple, quiet places to be. The libraries also act as repositories for the towns' inherently valuable local artifacts and historical documents.

Because of family memberships and out-of-date records, finding the exact number of cardholders at these incipiently electronic institutions is primitive guesswork. But each has a membership of at least half its town population, and probably quite a few more.

All four librarians report that their missions are to provide collections that reflect their communities and to keep what is of general interest on the shelves.

44

Lee Discovers Mix-ups Are Costly to Correct

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE — Three recent foulups on the part of municipal officials have resulted in a full-fledged and expensive liquor license hearing before the board of selectmen, a possible court action on a sign permit and a slap on the wrist for the board of assessors by the district attorney's office.

Because of missed cues and difference of opinions and sloppy requirements, the Locker Room Sports Bar & Lounge, of 238 Main Street, may have its license revoked January 13 when selectmen hear charges by neighboring residents, the Tristanys, that the owners, Donald Lucy and William LaGrant have violated the terms of their license.

Acting for the town will be lawyer F. Stanley Smithers IV of the Pittsfield firm of Cain, Hibbard, Meyers & Cook, who replaces town counsel Jerome Scully who at one time worked for the Tristanys.

Smithers charges $125 an hour. Scully, on annual retainer, makes about $12,000 from the town. The case has already occupied several hours of Smithers' time and is bound to occupy more, no matter what decision selectmen reach.

At issue, according to Smithers, are accusations that liquor has been sold and served outside the premises, that unruly patrons are urinating in the parking lot and that parking spaces owned by the Tristanys are being used by bar patrons.

Other complaints by the Tristanys over noise and other such nuisances are civil matters and must be resolved by the bar and the Tristanys.

Because the Locker Room was

Continued on A9

Berkshire Record 1/3/92

Lee Mixups Prove Costly for All

Continued from A1

granted an occupancy permit before there was any proof that there was adequate parking and because the space was never checked by the building inspector for occupancy rates, all the subsequent permits have been called into question.

The January 13 hearing at 7 p.m. in front of selectmen as licensing authority may be just the beginning of a series of hearing the Tristanys may seek.

The family, involved in a long-running dispute among relatives over the Main Street property, was ordered to sell that portion that was eventually bought by LaGrant and Lucy.

Speculation exists that the Tristanys, while armed with proof of legitimate complaints, are anxious to sell the rest of the property they have owned on Main Street since the turn of the century.

Meanwhile over on Railroad Street, Marilyn Kelly, owner of Sullivan Station, is digging in her heels over an order from selectmen to remove a sign she's had up for nearly 10 years, although the sign was moved fairly recently.

Sullivan received permission from three town departments to hang her sign off premises on the property of the Chambery Inn just up the street from Sullivan Station on Main.

But Lee has a no-off-premises sign bylaw and when another business in town was denied a permit for an off premises sign, Kelly's sign was cited as an example.

It turns out all the board made a mistake granting Kelly permission and now they are rescinding their decision, an action that town counsel Scully says is perfectly reasonable.

Kelly says, tough, she's not moving her sign because she was told she could have it, that she's had some sort of sign on the Chambery property for at least 10 years and she is involved in a quasi-business relationship with the owners of the inn for whom she does the cooking.

So, Kelly, says, some formal action will have to be taken before she even reacts to the order to remove her sign.

Then, self-appointed municipal watchdog Joseph Castronova, who was ordered out of a board of assessors meeting in November and formally ejected by a town constable, has managed to prove the board partially wrong.

Castronova had been prevented at that meeting from tape recording the proceedings and he complained to District Attorney Gerald Downing.

Responding to the complaint and assistant DA, Joseph Pieropan wrote to the board that it had erred in preventing Castronova from recording the meeting. He said the board had violated the open meeting law, but he stopped short of declaring the meeting invalid, which is the ruling that Castronova had wanted.

Berkshire Record 1/3/92

Eagle 1/3/92

Hauler protests order to relocate Lee transfer station

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Public Works Board has told the owner of Daley & Sons Trucking that he must move his waste transfer station off the town dump property by April 1, but Nelson Daley says he can't find another location.

Daley acknowleged, however, that he has not really been pounding the pavement looking for a new site. Instead, he appealed to the Selectmen on Monday night, asking them to encourage the Public Works Board to let him keep the transfer station where it is.

"The problem is I have everyone telling me to move it, but nobody's telling me where to move it to," he said yesterday.

The town officially closed the dump Dec. 1 and began shipping residential garbage to the Vicon Recovery Associates incinerator in Pittsfield. It plans to cover and landscape the dump area, and the Public Works Board has asked that Daley remove his transfer station to prevent damage to the landfill's protective cover, said Superintendent J. Peter Scolforo.

Installed in 1985

Daley installed the transfer station for commercial and industrial refuse in 1985, at a cost to him of about $60,000, he said.

He said he has an mutual arrangement with the town whereby he pays nothing to lease the land at the dump and picks up municipal garbage for free.

Daley said finding another 7,000 to 8,000 square feet of space in town will be no easy task. He would have to buy or lease a piece of property and would then have to go through the state and local approval process for a waste transfer station, he said.

Scolforo said the approval process for a transfer station is not as complex as for a landfill.

He said that Daley has known for several years that he would have to remove his transfer station and that he was formally notified in November that he must move by April 1.

"He's going to have to move it," said Scolforo. "It's right in our landfill."

Scolforo said he knows Daley has looked for another site, "but I don't know how hard he's looked."

But Daley said it is not so easy to find a place for a waste transfer station.

"You can't just drop it anywhere," he said.

He said that he has spoken to Western Mass. Electric Co., which owns property near the dump, but that the company had no property to lease to him.

"But we have to stay in business," Daley said. "We have to put it somewhere."

The Selectmen told Daley they would confer with the Public Works Board but will probably not overrule the board on its decision.

tees Will Remain

roup
ssed
night over
a decision to include town employees on the town administrator's search committee, the new appointees will remain in place.

Municipal critic Joseph Castronova said town employees shouldn't be involved in hiring their boss.

Selectmen Martin Deely said times have changed and yes they should.

Appointed to the committee, which is top heavy with selectmen and corporate officials from Mead Paper and Kimberly Clark, were Town Clerk Patricia Carlino and Public Works Superintendent J. Peter Scolfaro.

Berkshire Record 1/3/92

Bible Church Buys Caropresso Gallery

LEE — Berkshire Bible Church of Pittsfield has bought the former Caropresso Galleries on High Street for $200,000 and expects to move in by January 15.

The sale was assured after the town Zoning Board of Appeals granted parking and setback variances in December.

Berkshire Bible Church is an offshoot of the former Bible Speaks organization that was once based in Lenox.

47

Wake Forest.

Races tighten

■ ALPINE, from A7

Landry's first, a ninth by Kristen Rummell and some good work by the rest of the Greylock racers into a victory. Heidi Dillman, racing fifth for Greylock, turned in a 57.36, helping push her team into the winner's circle.

"She is skiing a lot better technically," said Greylock coach Leslie Orton-Maher of Dillman's work. "She'll be excited, especially after Katrina [Klaus] fell, there was a lot of pressure on her."

GIRLS TEAM RESULTS

1. Mt. Greylock, 219.21; 2. Taconic, 220.63; 3. Lee, 221.79; 4. Pittsfield, 224.02; 5. St. Joseph's, 233.67; 6. Wahconah, 234.98; 7. Monument Mountain, 235.18; 8. Lenox 251.65.

Top 10 Finishers

1. Courtney Landry (MG), 46.98; 2. Mandy Lahey (Lee), 49.39. 3 Michelle Truel (T), 50.11, 4 Julie Lyons (T), 50.76. 5 Jessie Murray (MM) 51.29 6 Megan Gibson (P), 51.74. 7 Julie Miller (P), 52.17. 8 Lisa Pyenson (Lee), 52.34. 9 Kristen Rummell (MG), 54.43 10 Melissa Johnson (W), 54.48.

BOYS' TEAM TOTALS

1. Lee, 185.45; 2. Monument Mountain, 191.27; 3. Taconic, 192.12; 4. Mt. Greylock, 207.41; 5. Pittsfield, 208.28; 6. Wahconah, 226.42; 7. St. Joseph's, 233.55; 8. Lenox

Top 10 Finishers

1. Matt Clark (Lee), 43.25; 2. Bob Tracy (MM), 45.36. 3. Eric McCormack (Len), 45.62; 4. Paul Giammattei (T), 45.84, 5. Dave Harrington (T), 46.01, 6. B.J. Perfetto (Lee), 46.40; 7. Mike Stodden (T), 47.12; 8. Steve Boyd (MM), 47.28; 9. David Walker (Lee), 47.29; 10. Roger Hull (MM), 48.44.

Alpine Skiing

Boys	Pts	Girls	Pts
Taconic	44	Pittsfield	44
Pittsfield	43	Taconic	44
Monument	43	Greylock	40
Lee	39	Lee	34
Wahconah	28	St. Joe's	28
Greylock	26	Monument	27
Lenox	19	Wahconah	25
St. Joe's	18	Lenox	18
*Hoosac	4		

*-Skied in only two meets.

Eagle 1-5-92

Land Bank to provide Lee development funds

LEE — Gov. William F. Weld has signed legislation enabling the Massachusetts Land Bank to provide funding for the town's purchase of property on Route 102, which will be developed as an industrial park.

The bill was signed last Monday, according to state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee.

The town is planning to buy three adjacent parcels of property that have been targeted for development by the town's Community Development Corp.

The town Planning Board is currently drafting a new bylaw that will govern development of the property. The new bylaw would require a two-thirds majority vote at a special town meeting.

The Land Bank will work in partnership with the CDC to establish the proper zoning provisions for the area, to finance the environmental studies required and to equip the site with utilities and roads.

Hodgkins said he believes the industrial park will be a draw for businesses because it is located close to the Massachusetts Turnpike.

"But the second reason that this is custom-made for our economy is that, basically, what this means for Southern Berkshire County is jobs," said Hodgkins. "This special legislation is going to bring jobs to South County."

Eagle 1/6/92

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

An auction gallery for the past 10 years, this church building on High Street in Lee will be returned to its roots on Sunday when it reopens for worship services to be held by the Berkshire Bible Church.

Eagle 1/6/92

A different kind of church revival

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Pastor John L. Gardner and members of his Berkshire Bible Church have scheduled services for Sunday in their newly renovated house of worship, formerly the Caropreso auction gallery in Lee.

Fundamentalist group resurrects Lee facility

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — A revival of sorts is about to happen in Lee, as a small fundamentalist congregation resurrects the shingle and clapboard church on High Street as a place of worship.

The Berkshire Bible Church, an offshoot of the former Bible Speaks ministry of Lenox, will hold its first services in Lee on Sunday morning at 10:30 in the building that was an auction gallery for the past 10 years.

And, yes, said Pastor John L. Gardner, its bell will probably ring each Sunday morning, adding to the potpourri of chimes from three other nearby churches.

"I don't want to antagonize the neighbors, but I kind of like the bell," said Gardner.

Gardner's church, which has been in search of a permanent home since its formation in 1987, bought the former Caropreso auction gallery property a week ago for $200,000.

The church mortgaged the entire purchase price, using as collateral a church-owned house and 10 acres on New Lenox Road in Lenox, Gardner said. Once that property is sold, a big chunk of the mortgage will be paid off, he said.

Making ends meet won't be easy, said Gardner, but tag sales, fundraisers and "faith in the Lord," he said, will keep the church afloat.

"It's been tight," he said of the church's financial status. "We haven't been financially overflowing. A lot of people have lost their jobs. . . . I've got people in the building trades who are really hurting. One family is moving out."

The congregation has about 100 adult members and about 110 children who attend services, which are held three times per week: Sundays at 10:30 and 6:30, and Wednesdays at 7:30. On Sunday morning, the church has been busing in children from as far away as North Adams, said Gardner.

Gardner, standing inside the vacant, freezing church last Thursday, said the church intends to spend about $4,000 installing insulation and constructing some Sunday school classrooms. His own office will be on the second floor.

CHURCH, continued on B3

Lee setting up group on police-teen relations

■ **TENSION, from B1**

Eagle 1-7-92

his friend outside the house arguing with Bartini. He continued down the street but returned when he saw cruisers heading for the house.

Curtin said that when he arrived, he saw his friend handcuffed on the ground and police kicking him. He said the police sprayed Mace into the boy's face and eyes.

When the boy began having an asthma attack, Curtin said he went to his car to get an inhaler. He then helped wipe blood and Mace from his friend's face.

Curtin said he was arrested later that night for assault and battery on a police officer and trespassing. Another boy, who was riding in the 16-year-old's car, was later arrested for assault and battery on a police officer and trespassing, but Curtin said he had not gotten out of the car and didn't touch any police officer.

Finnegan said his officers did not rough up the boy before or after he was handcuffed. He declined to discuss the specifics of the incident, since it is pending in court.

The mother of the boy who allegedly argued with Bartini attended last night's meeting but said she did not want to discuss her son's situation. She was there to ask the Selectmen why they had not yet responded to her request for an investigation into a complaint she lodged against the Police Department in November.

The Selectmen replied that Finnegan had done his own internal investigation, which drew sneers from the crowd.

One parent demanded to know why Finnegan had not been invited to last night's meeting, but Selectman Martin H. Deely said it was better to have people speaking freely, without police there.

Margaret Biron, who has a teenage son, said she is concerned that the police are too hasty to make arrests and lock up teenagers. Police should make more effort to resolve problems outside of court by involving parents, she said.

Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. Dupont said that it is not fair to cast the department in such a negative light and that the board should talk to the chief.

"Until we have a discussion with the Police Department, I can't sit in judgment," said Dupont. Later, he said, "We understand there's a problem. The issue is how to address it."

Lee parents say tension high between police, teens

Eagle 1/7/92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Tensions between some Lee Police officers and local teen-agers are escalating to a hostile pitch and one juvenile was reportedly roughed up by police recently, according to parents and teen-agers who attended last night's Selectmen's meeting.

Following the meeting, the board agreed to establish a task force comprising town officials, parents, police and young people to help identify and remedy some of the problems.

Police Chief Edward J. Finnegan, contacted at home after the session, said he is weary of parents turning on the Police Department when their children break the law.

"I don't feel my people are or have been aggressive any more than what's necessary," he said.

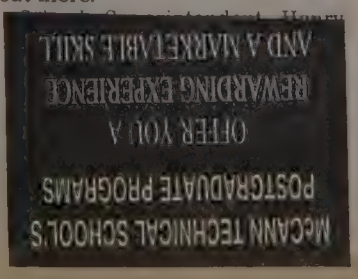
Finnegan said that he will send a liaison to the task force if the Selectmen request police involvement but that he won't allow the department to take the rap when youths get in trouble.

25 attend

Last night's meeting was initially billed as a discussion about what the Lee Police are doing to promote drug and alcohol awareness at the town's schools. There was hardly any discussion of that subject.

About 25 people — including school officials, students and mostly parents — crowded into the Selectmen's office to voice frustration with what was described as a mutual lack of respect between police and young people. Some were parents whose children had been arrested, others were not.

"It's a terrible situation out there," said Charles O'Neil, a parent, volunteer baseball coach and school volunteer who requested the meeting a few weeks ago. "There's no respect from the officers toward the kids, and in return they get back what they give. Somebody's going to get hurt out there."



Advocate 1/8/92

Kids and cops at odds in Lee

Continued from page 1

going on; we know," Lee School Committee member Carol LeProvost told the selectmen. "We're afraid that something terrible is going to happen like in West Stockbridge," Seven years ago, a youth died in the back seat of a police cruiser after he was arrested.

Lee Selectmen, however, expressed confidence in the police department's conduct.

"I have to assume that the police department does not simply arrest them (for first-time minor offenses)," Selectman Joseph F. Dupont said. "I don't think that they do."

Selectman Martin Deely added that they will ask Finnegan to look into the complaints and that if any problems are found they will be resolved.

But resident Charles O'Neil, who has complained to the selectmen for several months about police conduct and other matters, asked the board members to intervene in the issue and look into the problems themselves.

O'Neil requested the board to seek aid from the school department in confronting the issue.

"There's no respect for the officers on the street and they're getting the same in return," O'Neil said. "The police department has a tough job. I know I wouldn't want to do it. But if something isn't done, somebody is going to get hurt."

O'Neil has suggested that a program be developed in which students learn what police officers do and learn some basic information about law enforcement.

"There has to be face-to-face meetings between the police and the kids other than the confrontations on the street," O'Neil says. "What I see as a parent and a taxpayer is that nothing is being done here. They need to meet and have a dialogue."

Lee School Superintendent Henry Zukowski says the schools will help in developing a program. But, he says, teachers and faculty can only do so much.

The Lee police already have a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program in the lower grades, Zukowski said, which has gone well.

"It has been brought to my attention that we are reaching an impasse and an adversarial relation is developing," Zukowski said. School officials besides Zukowski say they have heard about some of the incidents and said that the youths involved have not been troublemakers in school.

"If there is a plan, it should include other authorities," he said. "Our schools already have a program for drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse. It's time the community got involved."

He said a program run by former police officers called New England Regional Center for Drug-Free Communities could be enlisted to improve relations between police and youths. The goal would be to teach youths about police and their role in society.

But several people at the meeting said that some police officers should also change their tactics.

"I think (the program) would help, but I think the problem is a few of the cops," Ben Biron told the selectmen. "I don't think kids should get arrested for knocking over a sign."

Some residents, however, say that many youths have been abusive to police for few and trivial reasons and that not all the officers may react in the most appropriate manner.

The selectmen said they will appoint a task force within two weeks to develop ways to relieve tensions. The group would include a selectman, a school committee member, a police officer, a parent and possibly a youth or other interested residents.

In developing a program, Lee Central School Principal Stephen Cozzaglio suggested that the task force consider ways to make children familiar with police starting at a very early age.

"You're not going to solve a problem by just looking at the teen-agers," he said. "It's got to start when they're youngsters. It has to be long range -- so that in 20 years you won't need a task force at all."

Literacy program *for south county is being coordinated by Zoe Dalheim on the right at the Lee Library under the offical supervision of Lee Librarian Georgia Massucco.*

Advocate 1/8/92

Lee task force to ease kids and cops tension

1/8/92

Hoping to head off a potential hate-hate relationship, the Lee Selectmen are forming a special task force to try to lessen or eliminate friction between Lee teen-agers and Lee police.

The decision was made after about 20 parents, teachers and youths attended Monday's selectmen's meeting calling on the board to investigate police conduct in the arrests of several local youths.

"I am very, very concerned about a series of incidents that have occurred," Margaret Biron told the selectmen. "We live in a small town. I want to see this handled through cooperation. I don't want to see divisiveness."

Lee Police Chief Edward Finnegan says the police department would take part in the task force if the selectmen request it, although he would not be a committee member. But, he adds, the alleged problems have been exaggerated or are untrue.

"Anything the police have done so far has been justified," Finnegan said Tuesday. "The people don't know what they're talking about. If they don't know they're talking about, they should keep their mouths shut."

Residents told the selectmen that they are very concerned about cases in which they say youths were taken to the Berkshire County House of Correction for relatively minor violations of the law. Parents add that some teens have been arrested for what they consider to be first-time offenses over minor matters.

Some residents have also complained that a few police officers have used excessive force. Spray-painted across one Main Street building are graffiti reading "LPD beats on kids."

"We're not here because we suspect there's something

Continued on page 12

Advocate

In search of leadership

Lee and Lenox take differ

The search for paid professional administrators in Lee and Lenox is taking two very different paths reflecting the different philosophies of the two town governments.

In Lee, the search committee includes prominent town employees and the Selectmen are interested in possibly hiring a town administrator with ties to Lee or the Berkshires.

And in Lenox, the Selectmen have gone out of their way not to appoint anyone on the search committee with any ties to town government. The board has all but eliminated the possibility of hiring a town manager from Lenox.

"The big test about who is right will come when the results come in a couple of years from now," says Lee Selectman Martin Deely.

Both Lee and Lenox received state approval in 1990 to reorganize their respective town governments. In Lee, the town will have a town administrator form of government, and Lenox a town manager governmental structure.

The Lee search committee held its first meetings in December. The Lenox search committee meets with the Lenox Selectmen tonight (Wednesday) for its first meeting.

Deely lost his temper at last week's Lee Selectmen's meeting when some residents repeatedly criticized his board for appointing Town Clerk/Treasurer Patricia Carlino and Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scolforo to the search committee.

Joseph Castronova and Charles O'Neal said the appointment would lead to conflicts in town government as the administrator would be Carlino's and Scolforo's boss.

Lee Selectmen Chairman Joseph DuPont says he, too, has questions about the appointment and opposed it.

"I've never worked in an environment where I've had a say in who my boss is," DuPont says.

But David Klausmeyer says there are good reasons to do so. Klausmeyer is president of Mead Specialty Paper Division Corp. and is a member of both the Lee and Lenox search committees. At Mead, Klausmeyer has helped initiate a quality improvement program empowering all employees in the decision making process.

"The people doing the work right now ought to have an opportunity to talk to the person who will influence their job," Klausmeyer says.

He adds that Carlino and Scolforo will not make the final selection, but rather will only be part of a seven-person committee in the preliminary rounds of interviews to narrow down the choices. The Selectmen will have the final say.

Deely adds that the resistance from town employees to a town administrator is a good reason to include employees in the selection process.

"If the town employees feel we're hoisting a decision on them, then if the town administrator is going to be effective they should have some input. Otherwise it's going to be very difficult for the town administrator when he or she arrives. It could become an unpleasant taffy pull if the wrong person is selected."

Deely says he may be interested in appointing a person with Berkshire ties to also ease the transition into a new form of government. He is quick to add, however, that he and other committee members will consider all applicants.

"The question that may be difficult is if there are two evenly qualified candidates," Deely says. "I'd give half a point to someone who is close to home and doesn't see Lee as a way station to bigger and better things. You want someone who will stay and bring stability."

Dupont, however, says he would prefer to pick someone with no connection to Lee. "I've always said we need somebody from Oshkosh with fresh ideas," Dupont says.

In Lenox, however, one selectman who requested anonymity said it would be a bad

50

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Sallie Kate Park
Heads Y-Me, the breast cancer support group

Eagle 1/8/92

'Let me decide'

Park fights for implants

By Mary-Jane Tichenor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Sallie Kate Park of Lee, who had a silicone gel breast implant following cancer surgery, said yesterday that implants should remain available despite the health controversy swirling around them.

Park, chairman of the county breast cancer support group Y-Me of the Berkshires, agrees with the national organization's position that breast implants should continue to remain an option to all breast cancer patients as long as they are fully informed of the risks and benefits.

The Food and Drug Administration on Monday called for a temporary halt to the sale and use of the silicone implants while the agency evaluates recently obtained information that has raised new concerns about their safety.

Would do it again

Park, a lawyer by training, says that the FDA should have set up a national registry and believes that a uniform consent law about implants is needed.

"If there is a possible risk, tell me, but let me decide — it's my body," she said.

Implants have been around for 17 years. Two million women have had them, 20 percent of them for breast cancer or other medical problems, the rest for cosmetic reasons. Park said that 93 percent of the women who have had them are satisfied.

"The vast majority of women, given the option again, would do the same thing — even those women who have had problems — some of them serious problems," Park said.

Dr. David A. Kessler, FDA commissioner, called for a voluntary ban on the use of implants after 2,500 complaints.

"That's only 0.1 percent, an amazingly good record," said Park.

"I have talked to women who have had some very serious problems with implants in the past and have had surgery several times, and yet some of these women, when they learn about a new type of implant on the market, have indicated a willingness to go through surgery again to get a new type called a textured silicon implant."

The new implant is similar to Meme, a polyurethane-coated silicone implant, which was taken off the market last year. It virtually eliminates contracture, a major complaint that sometimes requires

IMPLANTS, continued on B4

Page 3 The Advocate Jan. 8, 1992

ent paths to similar goal

idea to pick a person with even the slightest possibility of a conflict as a Lenox town manager. Indeed, the enabling legislation for town manager specifically prohibits anybody involved in town government as a candidate for town manager.

"There are going to be a lot of highly qualified people who will be looking for a challenge that will be applicants," Selectman Joseph Nolan says. "My attitude is to get the best qualified person from anywhere. I don't believe we'll find anybody local who will have the best qualifications."

Similarly, interviewed Lenox Selectmen say they did not want anybody in town government involved in the search committee because of potential conflicts of a town manager being beholden to an employee.

"The people who will work for a town manager should not be involved in picking him," Nolan says. "The people who are looking should have the qualifications of a management type of person. We're not picking a secretary. We're picking a decision maker. Decision makers should be on the selection committee.

Eagle 1/8/92

Park fights for right to choose implants

■ IMPLANTS, from B1

removal of the implant, Park said.

The FDA is concerned about leakage of silicone gel around the implant, rupture of the device and interference with mammography readings.

Medical investigation

"The FDA has released statements in the past that there has not been any direct connection between autoimmune disorders and silicon implants," Park said, adding that there has not been any direct connection between silicone implants and the causing of breast cancer.

But the FDA is expected to examine the possibility of links to all or some of these possible problems during the moratorium.

Saline-filled implants, which are considered safer than the silicone gel devices, are not affected by the FDA decision.

"I elected not to have it because I understand they're heavier," Park said. She had a tissue expander put in last May and her permanent custom-made implant at the end of October. Because it is of textured silicone, she is not worried about contracture problems and it is cosmetically more pleasing.

Another option for women is to use their own tissue, either from the shoulder or the tummy. "That's an expensive and extensive operation — more hours, more complicated and more risk involved," Park said, and to her totally unacceptable. "I had problems enough with nerve damage from removing the lymph nodes and I'm not going to risk any more nerve or muscle damage than necessary, but that's my choice." Larger-breasted women often choose to have a tummy tuck, she said.

To educate the public, Y-Me has offered its files and women willing to speak about their experiences to the FDA. "The FDA has never even contacted us," Park said.

Seek second opinion

The local chapter, just a year old, has six or seven volunteers. "We have women who come to us and have been helped and continue on their way," Park said. She always urges women who have been diagnosed with breast

Otis presses Lee board for release from union

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Lee School Committee's refusal to release the town of Otis from the three-town school union is fueling resentment that will bring costly consequences to Lee, Otis officials warned Tuesday night.

"My question is: What do you think you have to gain by not letting Otis out?" said Otis School Committee member Peter Paulson, speaking to the Lee board. "You'll sink your own ship, alienate Otis from Lee and cost taxpayers a lot of money. We'll offer superintendent services to Tyringham and tuition our kids elsewhere."

Lee, Otis and Tyringham form School Superintendency Union 29, an affiliation of towns that share a school superindendent and administrative costs.

'We're going to leave'

Otis wants to withdraw from the union to form a regional school district with Sandisfield to consolidate their elementary programs. But Lee and Tyringham are blocking Otis' efforts primarily because of worries about losing Otis' share of the superintendent's budget.

"You're holding us hostage because you want to see how your budget looks," said Otis Selectmen Chairman James Ebitz. "Make no mistake, we're going to leave the union."

The topic came up at both a school union meeting and at the Lee School Committee meeting later that night.

Paulson told the Lee board at its meeting that the Otis School Committee intends to invite Tyringham to join the new Farmington River Regional School District with Otis and Sandisfield. Tyringham would have to vote to dissolve the union in order to regionalize.

Eagle 1/9/92

WARNING, continued on B4

Otis presses Lee board for release from union

■ WARNING, from B1

"If we give Tyringham a better deal on the superintendent, that could sway their vote," said Paulson.

And there were also veiled hints that if Lee does not release Otis from its obligations to the union, Otis will retaliate by withdrawing its students from the Lee schools — depriving Lee of tuition money it has come to depend on. Instead of tuitioning its middle and high school students to Lee, the town would send its students to Great Barrington, officials said.

Board hold to decision

After Otis officials and residents implored Lee to "do the right thing" and dissolve the school union, the Lee board reaffirmed its earlier vote against dissolving the school union.

The vote was 2-2, with Chairman Edward M. Lahey and member David K. Chivers both absent. A tie vote doesn't carry.

Board member Gary Norton had moved for the new vote, urging his colleagues to release Otis from the union. He said the town should be entitled to self-determination when it comes to educating its students.

And, he added, "Repercussions down the line could be significant.

"Let's do the right thing before we're told [by the state Legislature] that we have to," he said. Board member Roland Besaw concurred.

However, School Committee members Carol E. LePrevost and Judith L. Olds, both casting no votes, said their concerns were mainly financial. Lee would lose about $23,000 from Otis, perhaps forcing Lee and Tyringham to make up some of the loss. If Tyringham also leaves the union to join the new regional district, Lee could lose another $10,000 to $12,000.

LePrevost said Lee is now hostage to the threats put forth by Otis officials.

"Now we're getting threats, and either way it'll cost us money," she said.

She expressed frustration that Otis went forward in forming a regional district without inviting Tyringham and Lee to join.

"You never thought of Lee and you never thought of Tyringham," she said. "I feel you rushed into this. I'm not totally sure Otis has heard the negative side of regionalization."

Otis can get around the problem by seeking legislative approval to form a regional district, and state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, has agreed to file a bill.

Regional vote invalid

However, there is a hitch, Lee learned Tuesday night.

Denise K. Gould, chairman of the Otis School Committee, told the Lee board that Otis' November special town meeting vote to form a regional school district was invalid because it wasn't done by a secret ballot. The vote can be made valid by a legislative act, said Gould, or by another special town meeting — whichever comes first.

Gould said that Otis and Sandisfield are still proceeding with plans to regionalize, pending legislative changes.

She urged Lee officials to resolve the matter before the Legislature does so, and before bad feelings escalate in Otis.

"We're imploring you to do the right thing," she said. "If you don't there'll be a massive letter-writing campaign, and it will generate a lot of negative publicity for you."

She said that saving "short-term dollars" does not justify Lee's position.

"This is the beginning of a major confrontation," said Paulson after the meeting.

Lee Viewers Seek Better Cable Service

1-10-92

By David A. Smith

LEE - Stable rates, a better basic service, and the extension of cable to the entire town of Lee were three concerns expressed Monday night by Lee residents to members of the town's Cable Advisory Committee.

The committee, currently negotiating with Century Berkshire Cable for the town's cable contract, met for public input in preparation for a January 15, four-town cable committee meeting with Lee, Stockbridge, Lenox and Great Barrington.

Stabilization of rates was a major concern of cable subscribers in response to a survey about their cable service, according to committee chairman William Bean.

"They feel they pay too much for their rates as compared to what they get," he said. Connect and disconnect fees, a major concern of second-homeowners, and fees for service to more than one television set, were also mentioned in the survey.

Members of the committee also expressed concern over the extension of cable to any residence with electricity in the town. "Anyone with electricity should have cable," said committee member Cathy Field.

"They pay for all public utilities, but don't get basic cable," said Bean. "That's very upsetting to some of the people in the town of Lee. It deters a lot of people

Berk. Record 1/10/92

Lee selectman c of police chief's remarks

Eagle 1/10/92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. Dupont said this week that the Lee Police Department "has a serious public relations problem" and that Chief Edward J. Finnegan's published remarks haven't helped improve the situation.

Finnegan's department is facing scrutiny after parents and teen-agers accused some officers of hostile and, in one instance, violent behavior toward young people.

The chief, in an interview with The Advocate newspaper this week, was quoted as saying, "The people don't know what they're talking about. If they don't know what they're talking about, they should keep their mouth shut."

Dupont said he was upset by Finnegan's remarks. He said he intends to meet with the chief to discuss public concerns about the Police Department's image problems.

Meanwhile, the Selectmen have begun appointing people to serve on a task force to look into relations between the police and young people. One of those appointed thus far is Officer Joseph Buffis.

Contacted yesterday, Buffis said, "I think the problems that surfaced the other night have been ongoing for a long time."

There are improvements that could be made, he said.

Parents and teen-agers packed

CHIEF, continued on B4

58

Eagle 1/10/92

3 children die in Lee crash

Two adults, fourth child badly hurt

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — A Sheffield couple's three children, on their way home from school in a car pool, were all killed yesterday when the car in which they were passengers spun out of control on an icy Route 7 into the path of a pickup truck.

Joshua Moritz, 11, his 9-year-old sister Kristen and 8-year-old brother Daniel, the children of John A. and Elizabeth "Libby" Moritz of Cook Avenue in Sheffield, were pronounced dead at the scene of the accident. Some rescue personnel said it was the worst accident they had seen.

The driver of the car, Raymond A. Wells, his wife Laura and their daughter Gillian, 11, of 143 Bridge St., Great Barrington, were critically injured.

The Wells family was taken by Lee and Lenox ambulances to Berkshire Medical Center, where Raymond Wells underwent surgery for cerebral and spinal injuries and was later admitted to an intensive care unit.

Transferred to Baystate

His wife was admitted to a surgical floor after being treated in the emergency room. Their daughter was transferred to the pediatric intensive care unit at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, according a nursing supervisor at BMC.

The driver of the truck, Frank Romeo of 5 David Ave., Lee, whose age was not available, was treated and released from the emergency room. He was taken there by family members, police said.

According to Lee Police Officer Joseph Buffis, Mr. and Mrs. Wells had gone to Pittsfield to pick up their daughter and Joshua Moritz from Berkshire County Christian School on Williams Street. The other two Moritz children attended the Lee Christian Academy on Pleasant Street. They were on their way to Great Barrington at about 3:40 p.m. when the crash occurred.

"This is the worst accident I've ever seen in my life," Buffis said last night.

Buffis and Police Chief Edward J. Finnegan said Raymond Wells apparently hit an icy spot in the road — it had been snowing earlier in the afternoon — and spun out of control just south of Summer Street. As the car, a late model Subaru Legacy, spun into the opposite lane, it hit the northbound pickup truck driven by Romeo.

The rear of the Wells vehicle was smashed forward, its glass shattered and trunk torn apart. The vehicle buckled in the middle from the impact. The three Moritz children, all in the back seat, were killed. Police said they believe Gillian was seated in front with her parents.

In the mangled trunk there was a football; in the back seat a bag from Blockbuster Video and a magazine with pictures of actor Michael J. Fox.

Finnegan said Lee and Lenox

CRASH, continued on B6

Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

The car, spinning into a pickup truck in the opposite lane, was badly compressed. The roof was removed by rescue workers.

Eagle 1/10/92

Crash claims lives of three children

■ CRASH, from A1

fire departments responded with the Jaws of Life apparatus and cut the roof of the car off in order to reach the victims. They were all wearing seat belts, Buffis said.

Police from Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge and West Stockbridge responded to the accident scene, as did state police from the Lee barracks. Route 7 was closed and traffic was detoured until about 6 p.m. while wreckers towed both vehicles away.

Richard A. Haapanen of Monterey, principal of Berkshire County Christian School, said last night Joshua Moritz "always had a smile on his face" and was a good friend to his friends. He enjoyed sports and played football at recess, even in yesterday's chilly, wet weather.

He described Joshua as a Christian boy who had "a solid relationship with the Lord, so he has nothing to fear."

Pastor Robert Hedge, principal of the Lee Christian Academy, said the accident is "devastating" and has called off school today for the other nine students that attend the academy.

"They were very lively children; wonderful, happy children," he said of Kristen and Daniel. "Kristen's birthday would have been on Monday."

He said Kristen, a 4th grader, came into class yesterday and said to him, "Guess what? On Monday I'll be all my fingers."

Hedge said Daniel, a 2nd grader, grabbed him twice yesterday and said "I love you."

There are only 11 students in the whole school, and to lose two, he said, is a tragedy.

Eagle 1/11/92

Faith buttresses families in Lee tragedy

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

As staff members of the Berkshire County Christian School in Pittsfield began calling the school's families, they found them "praying for the Moritz family and for the peace of God, which passes all understanding," the school's principal said yesterday.

The families were also praying for the recovery of the Wells family, said Richard A. Haapanen, the principal. The staff made the calls to notify parents that the school would be closed yesterday because of the deaths of Joshua Moritz, 11, Kristen E. Moritz, 9, and Daniel J. Moritz, 8, the only children of John A. and Elizabeth Fox Moritz of Cook Avenue in Sheffield.

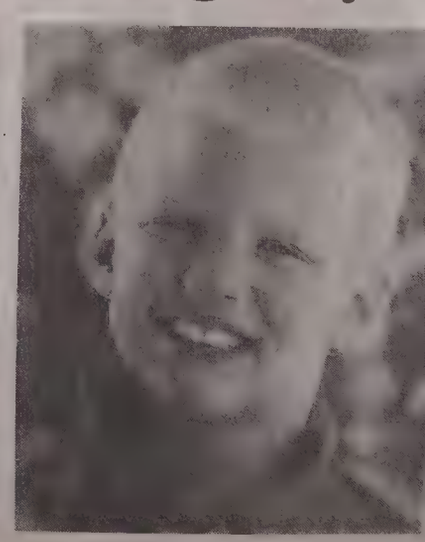
Icy road

The youngsters were killed Thursday afternoon in an automobile accident on Route 7 in Lee, said by police to have occurred when the car in which the children were passengers skidded on icy pavement into the path of an oncoming pickup truck.

Joshua was a student at Berkshire County Christian School, which is on the grounds of Grace Congregational Church at 1055 Williams St., Pittsfield. Kristen and Daniel were students at the smaller Lee Christian Academy, housed at the Berkshire Hills Baptist Church in Lee.

Daniel J. Moritz

Kristen E. Moritz



Joshua D. Moritz

Severely injured in the same accident were Raymond A. and Laura Wells of 143 Bridge St., Great Barrington, and their daughter, Gillian Wells, 11.

Gillian last night was in serious condition in the pediatric intensive care unit at Bay State Medical Center in Springfield, where she was taken after first being driven by ambulance to Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield.

Her father, who was the driver, remained in critical condition in the intensive care unit at BMC. Her mother was in stable condition on a regular floor.

The driver of the pickup truck, Frank Romeo of 5 David Ave., Lee, was not seriously injured.

The Rev. Robert L. Hedge, director of Lee Christian Academy, also closed his school yesterday. The two younger Moritz children were among eleven pu-

TRAGEDY, continued on B

Lee Selectmen 'Bury' Letter Outlining Police Complaints

Continued from A1

Edward J. Finnegan wrote to Selectman Chairman Joseph Dupont informing him that the case was closed and enclosed the report of the investigation. He also wrote a brief letter to the woman.

None of these documents, although public, were mentioned in an open selectmen's meeting.

The mother of the 16-year-old boy, responding to expressions of incredulity Monday on the part of selectmen, who seemed to be dazed by the vehemence of residents' complaints against the police, asked for the floor and quietly reminded Dupont of the letter and complaint she had sent to selectmen.

She wanted to know why she had never received a reply.

Waffling, Dupont first said he just hadn't replied. Then he said he was waiting for Finnegan's report. Then he apologized for not replying.

Selectmen Martin Deely and Diane Roosa were silent on the subject of the letter.

In later telephone interviews, all three said in retrospect they probably should have made the documents public.

Dupont also said he hadn't written her because he'd "forgotten about the letters."

Deely said they (the selectmen) had decided not to read the letter because they wished to be sensitive to the mother, although she had not asked for confidentiality and could not have been given any guarantee of it under open meeting and public document access laws.

He couldn't say when the board had made that decision or even if it had been discussed.

Selectman Diane Roosa said, "I had copies of the stuff but I didn't bring it up because Joe didn't. I don't know why he didn't."

Chief Finnegan said he had marked all the correspondence "confidential" when he sent it to selectmen because "internal investigations are not open to the public."

Mary Schwind, associate counsel in the public records division of the Secretary of State's office, said, "Unless selectmen can come up with a legal exclusion, all letters and any other papers that come to town hall are public documents. The burden is on selectmen to prove otherwise."

County District Attorney said, "Certainly selectmen in Lee are aware that all such discussion (of documents) must always be conducted in a public forum or in an formally announced executive session."

While boards of selectmen are not required to mention or read any letter or document that comes to them, the habit in Lee has been to mention or read out loud all such correspondence and then place it in a wooden box on the selectmen's table for public consumption.

This was not done with the the Lee mother's correspondence.

Adding to the palpable hostility of the crowd was the manner in which the residents' complaints were aired.

Billed on the agenda as a report on the "Drug-Alcohol-Police Program," it became immediately apparent that something was funny when Superintendent of Schools Henry T. Zukowski began the discussion by announcing that as far as he knew, there were no viable complaints about these programs in the schools, that no one had asked for such a report and that the issue was about something else entirely.

He was apparently correct. Hardly any discussion about these programs took place.

Instead, a grapevine of concerned citizens had spent telephone time gathering support and the visitors to the meeting came looking for bear.

They resented that no matter what was supposed to be discussed, police insensitivity to teenagers, or drug programs, no police were present at the meeting.

Selectmen, with aplomb, said no police were there because they hadn't been invited.

That brought sneers and jeers from the crowd, which also took exception to the internal investigation conducted by the police.

The more recent December 17 episode in which three teenagers, one 17 and two minors, were arrested and charged with assaulting Officer William Bartini at his home on Fairview Street, also incensed the crowd.

Charges that police were all too quick to arrest rather than warn teenagers were made by several parents present.

But the force of their anger was somewhat dissipated when later investigation revealed that a few of the participants in the November and December episodes had had previous run-ins with the police.

Rumors were rife following the meeting, with accusations of gross police misconduct and insensitivity to charges that minors arrested had been brought to the house of corrections instead of to state-approved juvenile holding tanks.

Finnegan said the lockup in Lee was not yet finished and that all persons held are taken either to Pittsfield or to juvenile facilities in the Lenox jail.

No juvenile, he said, had ever been taken to the adult lockup.

The December 17 episode in which 17-year-old Stephen Curtin of Tyringham was arrested, along with two minors, came with contradictory rumors, one that Officer Bartini had been tipped off that an angry teenager was coming to his house to beat him, and, two, that police had somehow maneuvered things to set up the young men who were eventually arrested.

Chief Finnegan had no comment on the current case saying it was on ongoing investigation.

Curtin claims police roughed up one of the minors arrested on December 17.

Finnegan denies that charge.

The Record Delivers!

Lee Selectmen 'Buried' Police Complaint Letter

Berk Record 1/10/92

By Thelma O'Brien

LEE — In an apparent attempt to conceal complaints against the police department, selectmen decided in November to bury a resident's letter demanding an investigation of the actions of one Lee police officer and of the attitudes of the department as a whole.

Tensions erupted Monday night as that miscalculation, coupled with the recent arrests of three teenagers on charges of assaulting a police officer, were confronted at selectmen's meeting.

The angry confrontation between the board and about 30 residents resulted in an agreement by selectmen to appoint a task force composed of town officials, parents and teenagers to investigate remedies and to improve relations between the police and the town. Selectmen said such a group would be in place in two weeks.

On November 21, a Lee mother, who asked not to be named even though she is identified on public documents, wrote a letter addressed to the board of selectmen informing them she had filed a formal complaint with the police. She charged Officer James Loring with assaulting her 16-year-old son, and also engaging in unprofessional conduct. She enclosed a copy of her formal report to the police in her letter.

Her complaints grew out of a November 2 incident in which her son and several other teenagers, some of minor age, were involved in a fight and subsequently arrested.

On November 26, a three-page internal police investigation conducted by Officer Joseph F. Buffis concluded that the woman's complaints were "without basis, therefore unfounded and after investigation, disproved." Buffis said Loring should be exonerated and no further action taken.

On December 2, Police Chief

Continued on A9

Eagle 1/10/92

Lee student group wants condoms available at school

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Student Advisory Council at Lee High School wants the School Committee to consider the controversial subject of making condoms available to students on campus.

Paul Consolati, a senior and a member of the advisory board, said he believes the majority of students think condoms should be available at school. But he suggested that some will be shy about saying so at the next Health Advisory Board meeting.

The meeting is set for Jan. 27 at 7 p.m. in the superintendent's office at Lee Central School.

'A lot of parents don't think kids have sex. They're naive.'

— Lee High senior

Moral decisions

School administrators, citing the community's conservative character, say the school's responsibility is education, not the distribution of condoms. Certain moral decisions are better left to families, they said.

"Just because the students are here doesn't mean the responsibility should fall on the school to take care of this," said Lee High School Principal Richard Salinetti. "I just don't think school is the place to do it."

He acknowledged that Lee is a conservative community, "and we should listen to what the community says. My guess is it would be negative."

Still, he said, he'll abide by whatever decision the School Committee makes.

Consolati said he anticipates both positive and negative reactions to the proposal.

"If you go down to the drugstore, kids'll be embarrassed to buy condoms there," he said. "If they were in the high school bathroom, there would be easy access and it would be more private."

"A lot of parents don't think kids have sex," he said. "They're naive."

Salinetti said he's been waiting for this issue to come up in Lee, as other schools in the county tackle the matter in the wake of basketball star Magic Johnson's announcement that he has the virus that causes AIDS.

Joan Piacquadio, the nurse at Lee High School, said Lee is "a very strait-laced town." When the schools wanted to introduce a sexuality education program for younger students some years ago, there was strong resistance, she said.

At the high school, she said, students joke about condoms a lot, but there aren't a lot of "serious inquiries."

"I have mixed feelings about it," said Piacquadio. "I think the schools in one sense have taken over the role of parents to such a degree . . . there's got to be some family responsibility for some of the education in children's lives."

But her biggest concern is one of liability: What if the school distributes condoms and someone gets pregnant or catches the HIV virus while using one?

Piacquadio said she expects to see community members — including religious leaders — at the Jan. 27 meeting.

Lee High School adjustment counselor Kathleen Bort said that she and the Rev. John Bonzagni, associate pastor of St. Mary's Church, have been teaching peer education and leadership to high school students, and that the subject of condoms has been discussed in some detail.

At first, students say they believe it would be a good idea, but when questioned in more detail on the reasons why, students are not so sure, she said. In some cases students had more questions than they had answers, she said.

"Many aren't sure it's a solution to the thing," she said. "Many haven't thought it through comprehensively."

Said Salinetti, "Maybe the old idea, abstinence, is the only answer."

Lee home provides comfo

■ VETERANS, from A1

entered Lee Manor about four months ago, he said.

"This is the best house I've been in the last 22 years," he said.

Lee Manor was not always a nice place, says Chamberlain. There was a time, under the previous management, when the men were allowed only one shower a week, the food was lousy and, to save electricity, the men could not put on the lights in their rooms. No television was allowed during the day, Chamberlain remembers.

Because they felt unclean, he said, "we didn't want to be around nobody."

And if he was feeling down, he was on his own, he said.

Page has changed all that, said the veterans.

Page, who has no formal training in social work, nursing or the other skills she nevertheless seems to have in abundance, knows she brings something special to Lee Manor, which is now owned by a Springfield doctor.

"A man coming out of a hospital, if he can't make it at Lee Manor he can't make it anywhere," she said. "This is their home. It's not an institution. They have their dignity and pride. They can come and go as they please, but they have to be in by 8 p.m. and eat all their meals here. I want to know they ate and that they're safe."

The meals are prepared by Jim Moulton of Lee.

Page's eyes fill with sad, angry tears when she talks about how some of the men have not had a visitor or a letter from a friend or family member in all the years she has been there. Only a few have visits from family members.

Community links

She is equally moved that the Lee community has begun taking an interest in the men who live in the long, low red house with the plastic deer out front. Community involvement seems to have followed Page to Lee Manor.

"This home was totally isolated from people," she said. "I was appalled and mad, and I couldn't understand how families could just walk away from these people."

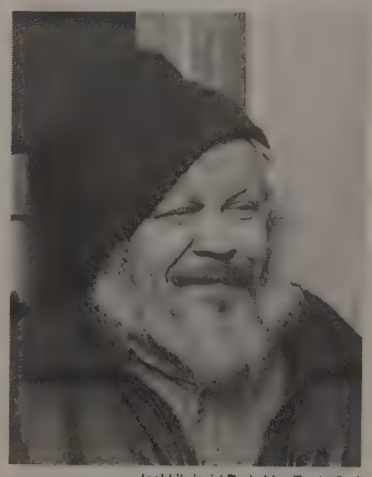
No one from the community ever visited, and no one seemed to know the men were there — even though the home has existed for some 30 years.

During Page's first year on the job, the men asked her not to put up a Christmas tree, because they never got presents anyway. She called them a bunch of humbugs and put up a tree. She and her family got Christmas presents for all the men, she said.

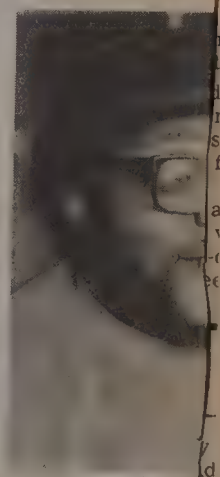
Since then, a Lee organization called Dreams of Joy, which collects and distributes Christmas gifts for needy residents of town, has adopted the residents of Lee Manor.

Sharon Carty Terry of Park Street, who started Dreams of Joy, is a regular visitor at the house, and the men light up at the mention of her name.

Meanwhile, St. Mary's School sends cards to the men on holidays and birthdays. Three children's groups came and sang in December, and the bellringers from St. George's Episcopal Church gave a short concert. The Veterans of Foreign Wars Women's Auxiliary threw a Christmas party for the men.



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff
George Janaczek
Tough times after Laos



Joel Libri
Frank R
Recalls wa

Elizabeth Navin, the auxiliary, visi bringing cakes and made desserts. Gary resident who recentl terested in Lee Ma fish tank and color for the veterans, sa

Cigarettes, allo kitchen and a down room, give a haze and the hallways a house is clean, an made. On the pil every bed is a Christmas gifts fr Joy.

Quiet days

The days of the pear quiet, limited the newspaper, tr the bus.

If the men nee they are taken t hospital in Nor consultations wit trist who regulat tion, they go t Army in Pittsfield

Some want to selves when a vis ers are eager to t

Frank Robinso ceived an engi from the Universi setts before being in Vietnam, laugh

55

1-15-92

Lee arcade closes. The reason: 'Out-of-control' youths

Eighteen months after Lee psychologist Michael McManmon opened a video arcade and soda fountain as a place for Lee youths to hang out, McManmon has closed the Main Street arcade and is changing the focus of the soda shop.

The Reason: A group of about a dozen "out-of-control" teen-agers is so unruly that McManmon says it is almost impossible to make the venture at The Cone Zone work.

"We tried to improve Main Street and build a place for the kids and it hasn't worked," McManmon says. "Most of the kids in town are fine but there are 10 or 12 kids who have made it impossible to run a business. They are rude. They spit in the employees' faces. They spit chew on the floor. They break things. When you try to talk to them, all they do is curse you out."

Ironically, McManmon's decision to close coincides with a major controversy in Lee between teen-agers and police. Several parents and teachers say police have overstepped their authority in dealing with youths and in some cases have been physically abusive, a charge police deny.

While saying he is "not an apologist" for the police, McManmon says he has had to call the police frequently to assist at The Cone Zone and has been impressed by their self-control.

"The police are dealing with a very bad problem...If you had to do it for a couple of weeks you would understand what it's like."

"I don't know what the police did or didn't in the other cases do but all I know is we've had very, very positive experiences with the police," McManmon says. "They have gone out of their way to work with the kids and have gotten nothing but abuse in return."

McManmon, a psychologist who works with youths and young adults with learning disabilities, started The Cone Zone in the summer of 1990 at the same time that an earlier controversy stirred involving Lee youths and police.

At the time, Lee teens, parents and teachers complained to the Selectmen that police were not letting them congregate at the Memorial Hall steps and there was no place in town for them to gather. The situation erupted when some youths were arrested for loitering on the steps.

"I thought The Cone Zone would help things out for the kids," McManmon says. "What I found out though is that a lot of those same kids and same parents who complained the most are the worst ones to deal with."

McManmon adds that he blames the media in part for portraying the teen-agers then and now as being relatively blameless victims in the controversies.

"It's a good thing this is all coming out again," McManmon says. "This shows that it's not the police. It's

Continued on page 12

Advocate 1/15/92

The Advocate Jan. 15, 1992 Page 12

McManmon closes arcade

Continued from page 1

not the community. The community is doing a lot for the kids. We definitely have more per capita for the kids in Lee than even Pittsfield. The problem is the kids."

"The message that has to get out is that despite the fact that the police may not have done the best job they could, they're mostly good guys," McManmon says. "They are dealing with a very bad problem. Most of them are family guys. They are not just out of the Academy looking for someone to go after. If you had to deal with these kids for a couple of weeks you would understand what it's like."

McManmon pins the blame on a changing society in which youths are using drugs and alcohol at a young age and are in family situations with very loose structure. When problems occurred, McManmon says he would sometimes try to deal with it through the parents, only to be given a tongue lashing by the parents for trying to interfere in their affairs.

Whereas parents used to automatically find their children at fault when a dispute arose and take them to task for a wrongdoing, McManmon says many parents now have gone to the other extreme and automatically assume that their children are in the right and others are to blame.

"I don't think it's just in Lee. We tend to be a little more open here with our problems. I know other towns like Stockbridge and Great Barrington have the same kind of problems," he says.

McManmon suggests that parents have to take more responsibility for their kids behavior, youths must be made accountable for what they do.

McManmon says he lost between $50,000 and $60,000 at The Cone Zone arcade, which he adds has made more money than the soda fountain. Disruptions from the arcade, however, overflowed into the soda fountain.

"We're not being driven out of business by them but at some point you decide you don't want to spend the rest of your future as a social worker for these kids," McManmon says.

McManmon is looking for a new tenant at the arcade space and is doing renovations at the soda fountain to add a bakery. The new business will place an emphasis on serving families.

In a related matter, the Lee Selectmen have scheduled the first meeting for a special task force to ease tensions between police and teens for Tuesday night. The charge of the committee will be three-pronged, Selectman Martin Deely says. The committee will be asked to look into ways for police and kids to work through the schools to improve relations; investigate alternatives for drug and alcohol counseling; and look into ways to provide counseling for families with youths who are acting out, Deely says.

© The American Tobacco Co. 1991.

Advocate 1/15/92

Learning Center and Lee VFW at odds over Rt. 102 driveway

Almost three years after selling The Learning Center land for a day care center, the Lee VFW Post No. 893 has attempted to block access to the center on Route 102.

The Lee VFW, which had threatened to block off the driveway to the center with a wooden stockade fence today (Jan. 15), was ordered by a Superior Court judge last week not to carry out the threat.

The Learning Center's attorney Donald C. Hunter says he hopes to resolve the dispute without going to court, and believes a resolution will be reached in the near future. Neither he nor the VFW's attorney, Jerome Scully, would comment on the case.

A lawsuit filed by The Learning Center states that when the VFW sold The Learning Center 2.8 acres for $110,000, the veterans' organization agreed verbally and in writing to provide access to the property through its existing parking lot.

The Learning Center, owned by Mary Bradbury, was built, and now provides day care services to 85 families.

But two years after the sale, the VFW's board of directors decided to try to seek an annual payment from The Learning Center for the easement. When Bradbury refused to pay, the VFW said it would build a fence across the driveway.

Last week, a portion of the fence was

New addition at Learning Center

built on either side of the driveway. Bradbury says the fence has made it difficult for motorists to see oncoming vehicles and is concerned about drivers' safety.

She says the prospect of building a new driveway on to Route 102 would be a "severe detriment" to the center because of the extensive regulatory procedure to obtain a curb cut permit from the state, and the cost of building a new driveway on the steep hillside.

Hunter says he received a summary judgement from the court preventing the completion of the stockade fence this week. "I'm hopeful that we can work things out now," Hunter says. "It probably can be worked out for the best interests of both sides."

Advocate 1/15/92

The Locker Room gets reprimand

Hoping to make The Locker Room Sports Bar & Lounge more responsible for the behavior of its patrons, the Lee selectmen voted Monday to write a letter of reprimand to the Main Street bar in Lee.

The decision came after an hour-long hearing in which the bar's neighbors, the Tristany family, described tales of patrons carrying liquor out of the bar, urinating on their property and street, and unruly behavior at the bar.

Although selectmen criticized the behavior of the bar's patrons, board members said it was difficult to cast all of the blame for the problems on the bar and its owners.

The hearing was held after the Tristany family lodged the following complaints:

-- A Locker Room employee served a bottle of Budweiser beer to a person in a car Sept. 8, according to Marguerite and Josephine Tristany who say they witnessed the exchange. Another witness, however, says soda was served in a can. The selectmen determined that there was no proof of wrongdoing and took no action on the issue.

-- Containers of alcohol have been taken out of The Locker Room on a regular basis, according to Marguerite Tristany who recounted several instances of seeing people commit the violation. The Tristany's attorney G. Bruce Rumph added that more than 60 bottles and cans of beer have been found on the Tristany lawn since the bar opened. Locker Room attorney Donald Hunter, however, said the owners have tried to prevent people from removing liquor, but some people have managed to sneak the liquor out. The selectmen found the bar in violation of the license on that issue and reprimanded them for it.

-- Dozens of Locker Room patrons have left the bar to urinate and defecate outside, either behind the bar, on Tristany property or on the street, Marguerite Tristany said. Bringing photographs to prove her allegation, she said, she and her family have discovered stained toilet paper on the lawn.

Rumph said the problems indicate that the Locker Room has not established adequate toilet facilities. Hunter, however, said the bar is willing to add more facilities, but needs direction from the town on how many to provide.

A majority of the selectmen agreed they could not reprimand the bar for the lack of facilities, but added that it was a disgrace that the problem exists.

"There's got to be a way to deal with this problem of public urination," Selectman Martin Deely said. "It doesn't only happen at The Locker Room. I really don't understand this moronic behavior. Anybody caught should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law."

Lee voters to consider abandoning town reps

Two former Lee selectmen are pushing for the town to abandon the town representative form of government in favor of an open town meeting government.

Former selectmen William D. Bean and Joseph Castronova told the Board of Selectmen Monday that they are circulating a petition calling for town representatives and voters to abolish the existing form of government.

Although the signature gathering has only just begun, the selectmen say they will place the question before town representatives at the annual May town meeting, for action.

"People see the town meeting as a part of government that they can't control," Bean says. "With an open town meeting more people would understand what the problems are."

Through a town representative government, voters elect about 50 people to represent them at town meeting to act on the annual budget and consider several other matters. In most Berkshire towns, however, all residents are able to speak and vote at their town meetings.

Castronova, who says he had originally been in favor of a town representative form of government when it was approved 20 years ago, says an open town meeting might promote more participation in government.

Many town representatives, he notes, do not attend town meetings currently, and several are poorly informed about the issues. He adds that about one-third of the town representatives are either town employees or town officials meaning that they vote on their own budgets or salaries.

"We've got to get more people involved in town government," he says. "The apathy is there. This is a way to turn it around."

But Selectman Martin Deely, who originally opposed going to town representatives, says the new form of government has worked out well. He says opening the town meeting up could provide power to special interest groups who could stack meetings for issues they are concerned about.

In another matter, Castronova says he is circulating a second petition objecting to having town employees on the town administrator search committee. He says the employees, Town Clerk/Treasurer Patricia Carlino and Department of Public Works Supervisor Peter Scolforo, will be in a conflict of interest with the new town administrator. The selectmen disagreed.

Ike Advocate 1/15/92

Golden Hill seeks zoning change in Lee

A public hearing will be held Tuesday at 8:30 at Lee Memorial Hall to consider a request to rezone the Golden Hill Road section of town.

Residents in the area have requested to change the zoning district from residential-agricultural to conservation-residential. The impact would mean that minimum building lots would go from 1 to 3 acres, and minimum lot frontage would increase from 125 feet to 200 feet.

Lee man charged with break-in, knife threat

Eagle 1/19/92

By Daniel O. Bellow
Berkshire Eagle Staff

OTIS — An unemployed Lee man is being held by state police on $50,000 cash bail, accused of breaking into a man's home and threatening him with a knife in front of his wife and children.

According to Trooper David G. LaVoice, Dimitri A. Freund, 20, of 200 Summer St., Lee, entered the Route 23 home of Richard and Julia Strampach and their three young children yesterday at 11 a.m.

Wearing a red ski mask and claiming he had a gun in a plastic bag he was wearing over his right arm, Freund pushed his way inside after Richard Strampach opened the door, LaVoice said. Freund then threatened the family and demanded drugs, LaVoice said.

"He said: 'I need drugs. Give me drugs. I'm not kidding,'" LaVoice said. A short struggle ensued, and Freund displayed a knife and held it to Strampach's chest, again demanding drugs, LaVoice said.

Julia Strampach went to the telephone and announced that she was calling the police; whereupon the intruder fled, LaVoice said.

LaVoice said he caught up with Freund a half mile away at the intersection of Routes 8 and 23 in Otis and placed him under arrest. He was charged with assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, assault in a dwelling house with a dangerous weapon, assault with intent to rob or murder with a dangerous weapon and attempting to commit a crime: armed robbery, while masked.

Freund, who LaVoice said did not appear to be under the influence of any drug at the time of his arrest, is being held at the Lee barracks on $50,000 cash bail. He has no felony arrest record and refused to give a statement to police, LaVoice said. He gave a second address of 34 Sunset Ave., Lenox.

Strampach, 26, is a self-employed landscaper. He and his wife have two boys, 5 and 8, and a 1-year-old girl, LaVoice said. Asked why Freund might have

BREAK-IN, continued on B6

New Lee lockup set for use after delay of six months

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — At last, Lee Police are going to get to use the town's state-of-the-art lockup to house their temporary prisoners.

The Town Hall renovation was substantially completed in July, but the new police lockup in the basement has never been used because of delays in obtaining parts for the doors to the three cells.

The delay has meant that the police have been transporting prisoners held on bail to Berkshire County Jail in Pittsfield under a temporary arrangement with county Sheriff Carmen C. Massimiano. Police Chief Edward J. Finnegan said this week the situation has not posed a problem for the Police Department.

State law requires that towns with populations of 5,000 or more provide cells for prisoners and that a prisoner must be monitored by a police officer at all times.

Finnegan said Massimiano has been helpful in accepting Lee's prisoners, as has Lenox Police Chief David W. Berkel, whose station has a lockup with two cells.

The project manager for the Town Hall renovation, Mark T. Dunn of Northampton, said the problems with the lock mechanisms were fixed about two weeks ago. All that is needed now is a certificate of occupancy from Lee's building inspector, he said.

The state Department of Public Health, which approves police lockups, apparently does not plan to do an on-site inspection but has given a verbal go-ahead to use the lockup, said Dunn.

Massimiano said last week he has had no problem in housing the six to eight prisoners per month that have been brought in from Lee since last summer. He said the county jail provided the same service for Lenox when that town was installing its two holding cells.

But he said the delay in Lee "has gone on for quite a while now, and we don't need any more" prisoners in the overcrowded jail.

Dunn said the contractors have been aggressive in their efforts to complete the lockup. But he said a Chicago parts supplier has given the town "a real dragging through the mud."

"I could see a delay of six or eight weeks," said Dunn. "But this was a case were you have letter upon letter upon letter between the contractor and the supplier."

Souliere & Zepka of Adams was the contractor on the renovation project, which cost the town more than $700,000.

Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. Dupont said, "As far as I know we have state-of-the-art facilities, and we should be using them."

He said he is satisfied after talking to Finnegan that the town is not being left without police protection when officers transport prisoners to Pittsfield. Other officers are called in to assist, he said.

Lee man charged in Otis break

Eagle 11/19/92

■ BREAK-IN, from B1

thought Strampach had drugs at his house, LaVoice said he could not comment on a case still under investigation.

LaVoice said that to the best of his knowledge, Freund had no gun. The knife the witnesses saw is still being sought.

Eagle 1/17/92

Arcade closes; rowdies blamed

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The owner of Main Street's video arcade has shut down his 18-month-old business, blaming a handful of disruptive teen-agers who he said were loitering outside, acting offensively and intimidating patrons.

Psychologist Michael McManmon, owner of the Cone Zone, said the youths involved "have a lot of problems and don't have anywhere to go or anything to do."

'I'm not sorry to see it go,' a businessman said.

"So what they end up doing is hanging out," he said.

He said the business could not support a full-time supervisor.

Some of the "10 or 12" teenagers, whom he declined to name, damaged the walls and video machines in the arcade, chewed tobacco and used foul language so that other customers didn't want to negotiate a way into ei-

ARCADE, continued on B4

Eagle 1/17/92

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle

This was the Cone Zone, the Main Street video arcade in Lee that owner Michael McManmon has closed.

Lee arcade closes; unruly teens blamed

■ ARCADE, from B1

ther the arcade or an associated ice cream shop. Efforts to talk to the problem teens were unsuccessful, as were calls to their parents, said McManmon.

He also said some were abusive to the Cone Zone's employees, some of whom are students in McManmon's residential program for learning-disabled adults.

Lee Police Chief Edward J. Finnegan said his department has received a lot of complaints of loitering at the arcade.

McManmon estimated the two businesses together have lost between $50,000 and $60,000, though he acknowledged that new businesses often lose money in the first few years. The ice cream shop is also closed for the winter season, he said, but will reopen with an added bakery, to become more of a family eatery.

Steven Loring, manager of the Videofile next door to the arcade, said that most of the young people who went to the arcade were "good kids" but that a few were unruly.

He said the first six months the arcade was open were the hardest, and that at one point he sat down with the McManmons to talk about the situation.

"I'm not sorry to see it go," said Loring. "Mike and [his wife] Linda had all the best intentions, but they started off on the wrong foot because they gave the kids too much leeway. That's just my opinion."

There wasn't any supervision of the teen-agers, some of whom were especially abusive, Loring said. He said he even canceled a couple of video store memberships to keep certain people away. The problem was worse when one particular older man in his 20s was acting as "ringleader" to the younger teens, he said.

McManmon said the youngsters causing problems didn't seem [illegible] terested in any of the other [illegible] tivities that are available in to[illegible] for teen-agers, and they made [illegible] arcade "their home."

"They don't go [to other acti[illegible] ties] because they think they[illegible] too cool," he said.

He said that perhaps an arc[illegible] is not appropriate for Main Str[illegible] in Lee.

Jeffrey M. Puleri, 16, said [illegible] used to go to the arcade [illegible] weekends to meet up w[illegible] friends.

"I think it got out of hand," [illegible] said. "The employers didn't [illegible] much control."

Lee lockup ready at last in Memorial Hall

Advocate Jan. 22, 1992

Six months after completing renovations at Lee Memorial Hall, the Lee Police Department can use its new lockup to house temporary prisoners. The lockup could not be used previously because of problems in getting parts for the doors to the three cells.

Several parents complained to selectmen earlier this month that the lockup was not being used despite the $1 million renovation of the building. As a result several youngsters were brought to the Berkshire County House of Correction for relatively mild wrongdoings, a situation they strongly objected to.

With the new parts, however, the police will not have to transport arrested individuals to the House of Correction or the Lenox Police Department which also housed suspects for the Lee Police Department.

Mountain View subdivision in Lee being foreclosed

Advocate 1/22/92

A partially built 13-lot subdivision in Lee will be sold next month at foreclosure auction.

Key Bank of Eastern New York will sell the Mountain View subdivision owned by Glenn and Laurie J. Hoff after the couple could not meet payments on a $434,000 mortgage from the bank. The couple received the mortgage in 1990.

The auction will be held on Feb. 24 at 11 a.m. at the property.

Two homes on the subdivision have been built. The subdivision has 14 building lots with one lot already being sold.

Work on the residential development stopped earlier this year. The Hoffs had notified the town that they could not complete construction on the road and the town would have to complete the work and take the money out of a $47,000 performance bond for the repairs.

Lee Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scolforo says the project would cost between $35,000 and $40,000. The town will not do the work unless the Lee Planning Board authorizes the expense.

Lee defines town administrator position

The Advocate Jan. 22, 1992 Page 12

The Lee Town Administrator Search Committee has decided to offer a salary of up $45,000 for a Lee town administrator who the selectmen hope to have working for the town by May.

The committee has written up a job definition for the town administrator and have begun advertising for the job in local newspapers, trade publications and in newspapers in the Springfield, Worcester and Northampton areas.

Once all the applications for the job are in, the committee will interview 10 candidates in executive sessions and then narrow the field to three finalists. The three candidates will be interviewed by the selectmen in a public meeting.

"We're looking for someone with managerial, financial and personnel skills," Lee Selectmen Chairman Joseph Dupont said Saturday. "We're looking for a complex person here."

58

advocate 1/22/92

Lee selectmen launch five-member youth task force

Hoping to get to the root of problems between Lee police and a several local youths, the Lee Selectmen on Tuesday night directed a five-person task force to study the problem and come up with a series of recommendations to try to resolve the issue.

"We're hoping you will find the broken parts and tell us how to fix them," Selectmen Chairman Joseph Dupont told the group. The committee consists of Police Officer Joseph Buffis, Lenox Central School Principal Stephen Cozzaglio, parent Charles O'Neil, Lee High School Dean of Students Kathy Bort and former Lenox High School Principal Paul Perachi.

The task force was appointed in the wake of a controversy in town in which several youths and parents have accused the police of exceeding their authority and at times physically abusing teens. Police, in turn, say they have properly restrained themselves and that most of the problems stem from a group of about a dozen youths. The Lee Police Association and five emergency dispatchers wrote letters this week to the Selectmen defending the police's conduct.

Selectman Martin Deely said he hopes the committee will take a three-pronged approach to the issue looking into:

-- The adequacy of existing drug and alcohol programs in schools and the town.

-- The relationship between police and certain teens to see how improvements can be found.

-- What the town can do to better coordinate programs for youths, parents and town officials.

"I personally think alcohol is the biggest problem this town has and should be looked into," Deely said. "When you come in with your suggestions I think you will have the full support of the Selectmen and I think the School Committee."

Lynn Dawson Reeber, a parent, praised the goals of the committee but asked the Selectmen to investigate the past conduct of the Police Department.

She said she believes some officers have abused their power in the last several months and suggested the Selectmen investigate. O'Neil suggested having the Berkshire County District Attorney's office investigate the Lee Police Department.

The Selectmen, however, said they would not investigate allegations of police beating Lee youths.

In a related matter, O'Neil criticized comments by Michael McManmon, owner of The Cone Zone in Lee. McManmom was quoted in THE SOUTH ADVOCATE last week as saying that several Lee youths are out of control, citing it as a reason for his closing a video arcade. O'Neil, however, said the business suffered from poor management and that McManmon, who works with young adults with learning disabilities, did not properly oversee teens at the arcade.

Lee Ambulance up a notch

The Lee Ambulance Service has been granted an upgrade in its license from basic life-support status to advance life support intermediate, director Kenneth J. LaBier says.

The new designation allows the ambulance squad to initiate intravenous fluids in the field and conduct higher levels of emergency service to patients.

"Most towns are having trouble getting volunteers to serve on their squads," says Lee Selectmen Chairman Joseph Dupont. "It's good to see that we've got volunteers who want to advance themselves. I'd say we're very lucky."

Lee may limit diagonal parking on Main Street

The state has recommended Lee eliminate diagonal parking on its Main Street from Memorial Hall to Eaton Street as a way to unclog summer traffic on the busy road.

By switching the parking spaces to parallel parking spots, the recommendation states, motorists would be able to pass cars waiting to turn on to Eaton Street.

Although Lee Selectmen Chairman Joseph Dupont says he doubts the wisdom of the recommendation, the Selectmen referred the report to the Traffic Committee. Also on the Traffic Committee's agenda will be drafting a town policy for "tolls" on Main Street in which volunteer groups solicit passing motorists for contributions.

Eagle 1/22/92

Officer says that Lee Police need community involvement

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — A 13-year veteran police officer said last night that the Police Department, "under the current administration," has failed to change with the times and must shift its mission to include broad-based community involvement.

"We've reached a critical point, and we've gone as far as we can go," said Officer Joseph Buffis, who has been appointed to serve on a five-member task force established to help improve the department's strained relations with the public, particularly teen-agers.

At the first meeting of the task force, Buffis said the "wall" between the police and the public must be eliminated to foster mutual respect for residents and police officers. As an example, he said the only time officers go to Lee High School is to conduct an investigation, raising tensions among students rather than bridging a gap.

The panel met in a small office in the police station on the second floor of Town Hall after the Selectmen gave it a broad mandate to set its own agenda and talk to anyone — parents, court officials and others — in order to develop recommendations for improved relations.

Other members

Other members are parent Charles O'Neil, Lee Central School Principal Stephen Cozzaglio, Lee High School adjustment counselor Kathleen Bort and attorney Paul E. Perachi of Pittsfield, a former Lee resident and past principal of Lenox Memorial High School.

Probation Officer Paul Collins of Lee had been invited to serve on the committee but declined, citing a potential conflict of interest.

The Selectmen established the task force after a number of parents and young people attended a recent meeting to complain that police were being overly aggressive in dealing with local teens.

Bort assumed the role of facilitator, asking Buffis and O'Neil to spend a few minutes talking about how each views the problems.

Buffis made no criticism of his boss, Police Chief Edward J. Finnegan. But he said that the chief holds a conservative view of law enforcement and that this view is not necessarily consistent with openness in the department.

O'Neil, whose initial complaints to the Selectmen resulted in the task force's formation, said there are a handful of teen-agers in town who are rowdy and rude to the public and the police. Likewise, he said, complaints about the police are limited to two particular officers.

In addition, he said, many young people are uneducated about the potential consequences of their actions and end up in trouble. He suggested that police be more involved in educating young people.

Procedure with teen-agers

Buffis said the police don't arrest youths instantly when a problem arises. Officers often give them warnings or take them into the police station and call their parents to come for them.

He said the problem youngsters are the ones who have no particular interests and little, if any, family life. Those who are in confrontations with the police are often the same ones night after night, he said.

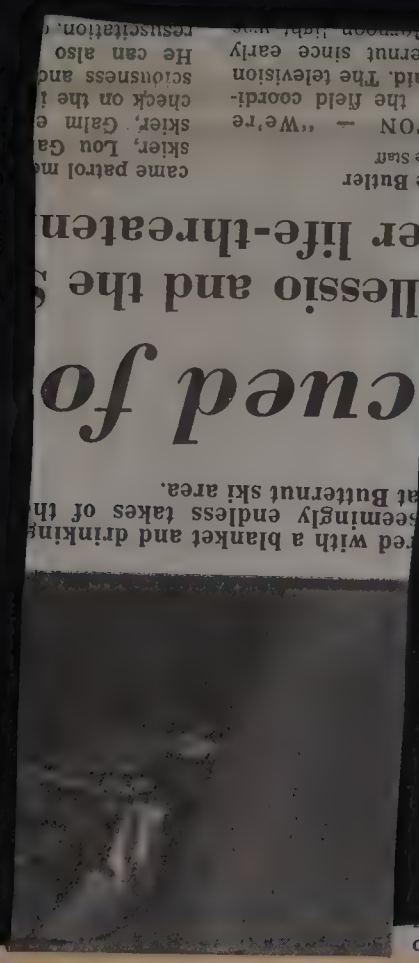
Offering his own suggestion, Cozzaglio recounted a day when the school's crossing guard was sick. When he called the Police Department seeking an officer to fill in, he was told no one was available. So he, the principal, went out and directed traffic.

Cozzaglio said that even having a police officer occasionally serve as a crossing guard would be a positive experience for the children.

"The first impressions children have of police can make a difference," he said, and Buffis agreed.

Perachi said that in Lenox, Police Chief David W. Berkel is a familiar person at the high school and the Youth Drug and Alcohol Committee sits down with children and their parents after a first offense has occurred. Those efforts have made a difference in the community, he said.

The task force decided to hold an open forum Feb. 10 to encourage public comments regarding relations with the police. That meeting will be at 7 p.m. at a site to be decided.



...ued fo...

...lessio and the S...

...er life-threaten...

...e Butler
...le staff

...TON — "We're ...; the field coordi... said. The television ...ternut since early ...afternoon light, more ... resuscitation, ...came patrol me... skier, Lou Ga... skier. Gaim e... check on the i... sciousness and... He can also ...

...red with a blanket and drinking ...seemingly endless takes of th... at Butternut ski area.

...confrontations with the police are ...meeting will be at 7 p.m. at a site to be decided.

Police leader says a few teens are creating the problems

Eagle 1/22/92

LEE — The president of the Lee Police Association in a letter to the Selectmen said police officers have a good rapport with most teen-agers in Lee, but are sometimes faced with a handful of young offenders over whom even parents have no control.

Officer Jack Winters' letter came in response to criticism that the Lee Police are overly aggressive and sometimes abusive in dealing with young people in town.

In one case, an officer has been accused of kicking a 16-year-old in the ribs after he was handcuffed on the ground; another officer has been accused of roughing up the same youngster in another incident, and other parents have accused Chief Edward J. Finnegan of using excessive force in drawing a gun on a 15-year-old who attempted to flee from the scene of an outdoor party.

Winters said the problems lie with a dozen or so youngsters.

"First and foremost, the police don't have a hit list, as was inferred by some parents. We readily admit that a dozen or so youths are quite a bit more troublesome than others, in which the cause is usually substance abuse or alcohol abuse."

The two-year-old Drug Abuse Resistance Education at Lee Central and St. Mary's Schools has helped to address substance abuse prevention, wrote Winters.

Winters said arrest is not the first option when police deal with teen-agers. Police often attempt to bring the youngsters to the police station and contact the parents.

"We have witnessed the lack of control the parents have on their children, along with the lack of respect shown to the parents by their own children," said Winters. "There is no wonder why there is no respect for the police when dealing with certain youths time after time."

Winters said problems between police and teens have indeed escalated. Town buildings have been spray-painted, cruiser windows smashed and officers' personal vehicles damaged.

Nevertheless, Winters wrote, the Lee Police Association "wishes to assure the board of Selectpersons and the townspeople that the police officers have been and will continue to work in a professional manner."

Six town dispatchers also wrote a letter in support of the police.

People call to report teen-agers swearing at them and intimidating them on Main Street. When the teens are brought into the station they swear, fight, spit and threaten the officers, the dispatchers wrote.

"In the end all we are really asking is that before the police get blamed for the problems of a couple of uncontrollable teenagers, the board might want to look at the families and the problems of communication and respect that isn't being taught at home," said the letter.

It was signed by dispatchers Christopher J. Winston, Charlene Abderhalden, Bernice B. Martin, Donna M. Tyer, Larry Cernik and Charles Roode.

Eagle 1/23/92

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Owner of Route 102 day care center, in building at right, has obtained a court order to stop construction of fence shown in photo. Pictured are Angelo Sorrentino, left, chairman of VFW Post 893 board, and Cmdr. Joseph Scapin Sr.

Lee VFW post at odds with owner of day care center over driveway

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Veterans of Foreign Wars and the day care center next door to the post home are in a legal battle over a driveway they shared until a few weeks ago, when the veterans began erecting a fence intended to block the center's access.

Mary K. Bradbury, owner of The Learning Center on Route 102, took VFW Post 893 to court and obtained a court order to stop construction of the fence. The partially built stockade fence, she said this week, is a hazard to parents who drive their children in and out of the day care center's parking lot.

But VFW Cmdr. Joseph Scapin Sr., whose post owns the driveway, said concern for the children — and liability worries — are what prompted erecting the fence.

He said the VFW had given Bradbury 90 days to obtain her own curb cut from Route 102; the 90 days expired Jan. 15. Because she didn't comply, he said, the post began constructing a fence to block access to her property.

He said he also is worried that a recent increase in VFW traffic will pose a liability problem for the post. That is why the group wants her to build her own driveway, but he said Bradbury has refused.

"I didn't apply for a curb cut," Bradbury stated. "I have no reason to, and it's documented.... That's why we never applied for one and don't intend to."

Bradbury bought her property from the VFW about 2½ years ago for $110,000, with the understanding, she said, that her day care center could share the driveway. The driveway to The Learning Center passes over a portion of the VFW property.

The agreement to share the driveway wasn't included in the deed to the property, although Bradbury said it is documented in other papers.

Scapin was not the commander when the property was sold. But he said his understanding is that the VFW intended to share its driveway only until construction of the center was complete.

The VFW recently decided to open for lunch six days a week and serves alcohol, and members are worried about potential liability for the VFW in the event of an accident.

Bradbury, however, said she never would have bought the property without reasonable access to it. She said then-Cmdr. John E. Farina assured her that she could share a driveway indefinitely.

Farina said yesterday he never gave Bradbury any promises about the driveway. He said that he referred her to the VFW's lawyer when she inquired about the matter but that she never got back to him and the sale went through. He said he is being blamed from all sides for the mix-up.

Bradbury said the VFW's lunch schedule doesn't conflict with the day care center's activities, since most parents drop off and pick up their children between 7 and 9 a.m. and 4 and 6 p.m.

The court injunction means that the VFW had to stop building the fence until the conflict is resolved — either through the lawyers or by the court.

But Bradbury said the fence poses a danger, because parents can't see through it.

"We almost had a collision the first night," she said.

Eagle 1/23/92

Supt. Zukowski grateful for overture from Otis

LEE — School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said he is grateful to two Otis School Committee members who have stepped forward to smooth tensions that arose during a testy Jan. 7 Lee School Committee meeting, at which veiled threats were made in response to Lee's objections to Otis' efforts to form a regional school district.

Zukowski said Otis School Committee members David Roberts and Kathryn LaGrant attended the Lee meeting on Tuesday night to inform the board that Otis has no plans to retaliate against Lee by withdrawing its middle and high school students from Lee schools.

Roberts could not be reached yesterday.

Students not 'pawns'

Zukowski said Roberts told the Lee board that he would not allow Otis students to be used as "pawns" in any disagreement between the two school committees.

The Lee School Committee has taken a stand against allowing Otis to withdraw from Superintendency Union No. 29, a three-town alliance that shares administrative costs and a superintendent. Otis wants to leave the union in order to form a two-town regional school district with neighboring Sandisfield.

Otis wants to dissolve the school union, but neither Lee nor Tyringham wants to lose the money that Otis contributes to the administrative budget of the union.

At the Jan. 7 meeting, Otis School Committee member Peter Paulson told the board that Roberts, who was not in attendance that night, had said he would make a motion to withdraw Otis students from Lee schools if Lee did not go along with Otis' efforts to secede from the union.

Paulson had also said he would ask the Otis school board to invite Tyringham to join the new regional school district, ending that town's alliance with Lee.

Zukowski said Tyringham has no plans to do so, however.

Zukowski said Roberts drove all the way from Rhode Island, where he was working on Tuesday, to attend the meeting and apologize for any misunderstanding.

Zukowski said LaGrant was eager to mend relations between the two boards.

Consolidate bus runs

In other business, the School Committee received three different proposals for consolidating school bus routes in the fiscal 1993 fiscal year.

Zukowski said he believes the School Department could save between $10,000 and $30,000 next year by consolidating bus runs. The high school buses are underutilized because of a lower school population and students who drive to school, school officials contend. Having two bus runs instead of three would mean a slight shift in school hours at the end of the day, said Zukowski.

Lee Central School Principal Steven Cozzaglio, who is also the bus transportation coordinator, proposed three options for bus routes. Currently there are three bus runs in the morning.

Zukowski said the best solution would be to put kindergarten through 6th graders on one bus run, while 7th through 12th graders would be on another bus run.

The School Committee will vote on changing the bus routes at its next meeting Feb. 4.

Lee VNA invited to session about condom distribution

LEE — The Lee Visiting Nurse Association has been asked to attend a Monday night meeting of the Lee schools' Health Advisory Board at which a proposal to make condoms available to students will be discussed.

The meeting is set for 7 p.m. in the school superintendent's office at Lee Central School.

Lee VNA Director Paula Schutzmann said the VNA will attend the meeting "to state some facts," not to take a stand on the controversial subject of condom distribution.

"I don't know if as an agency it's our position to state an opinion about the situation," she said. "We want to take as objective a stance as possible, since it's such a political issue in this town as in every town."

Schutzmann said the VNA will present some facts about AIDS and the HIV virus that causes AIDS.

Condom use is advocated nationwide as a way of preventing the spread of the AIDS virus, and some urban school districts are making condoms available to students.

Lee school officials have already expressed reservations about involving the schools in condom distribution. Lee High School Principal Richard Salinetti said that advocating abstinence is perhaps the appropriate role for the schools to take.

Other school officials have said they do not believe the schools should take on the responsibility — and possibly the liability — of distributing condoms.

The discussion was requested by the Student Advisory Council at Lee High School following basketball star Magic Johnson's announcement that he has tested positive for the HIV virus.

Schutzmann said the Lee VNA has attended to people with AIDS but so far has not encountered high-school-age patients with the fatal disease.

Eagle 11/25/92

Westfield River Paper may close mill in Lee

LEE — The union that represents the 45 employees of the Westfield River Paper Co.'s Mountain Mill on Forest Street will spend the weekend reviewing financial information that company officials say shows the mill's product could be more economically made elsewhere.

"I don't want to characterize this as a definite closing . . . The union may give suggestions that may have the effect of keeping the place open, or it may not," Irving Coughlin, president of Westfield River's parent firm, Simkin Industries of New Haven, Conn., told radio station WSBS of Great Barrington.

Coughlin said that he will meet with union officials on Monday and that a final decision regarding the mill's future will be announced on Tuesday.

According to Coughlin, the financial data given to the union shows that the glassine paper made at the Mountain Mill could be more profitably produced at a much larger mill that the company owns in Russell.

The glassine paper is used in candy wrappers and other applications, Coughlin said in the interview with WSBS. He asserted that company officials "have great respect for the people we have in Lee," and that the employees' familiarity with the Mountain Mills operations is expected to benefit the discussions about its future.

Andrew Chesnes of Ludlow, district representative of the United Paper Workers' Union Local 1499, said yesterday that he has no comment about the company's announcement.

"There is nothing that I can report now," he said.

Eagle 1/20/92

Eagle 1-25-92

Lee school board predicts loss of some teaching jobs

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The School Committee must slash $92,000 — and probably some teaching jobs — from the proposed fiscal 1993 school budget of $4.9 million, school officials said this week.

"We probably are going to lose some teachers," said acting School Committee Chairman Carol E. LePrevost.

She said the proposed expenditure for fiscal 1993 is 4.5 percent over this year's budget. But the Selectmen are putting pressure on all departments to limit increases to 2.5 percent.

If proposed town expenditures rise above 2.5 percent, the town would be obligated to seek an override of the Proposition 2½ levy limit — an effort that was unsuccessful last year.

School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said he expects to save $15,000 to $30,000 by consolidating bus routes next year, but that still leaves a large chunk to be cut.

He said that the personnel subcommittee of the School Committee will have to study staffing in the School Department. The required reductions, he said, "will mean a lot of challenges and questions at future meetings."

LePrevost said the schools thus far have escaped heavy cuts in the teaching staff. Last year one teacher was lost.

But the School Department is constrained in its ability to cut the budget because of fixed expenses, she said. For example, health insurance for school and town employees will rise 10 percent next year.

She also noted that Lee stands to lose some revenues when Otis withdraws from the three-town superintendency union and forms a regional district with Sandisfield. And under the state school-choice law, some middle and secondary school students from Otis who now attend classes in Lee may switch to the Berkshire Hills Regional School District.

The budget cuts are scheduled to be discussed at the next few School Committee meetings.

Eagle 1-26-92

Hodgkins: Electric costs shock business

By Mary Grace Butler
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — A statement made earlier this week that the burden of a proposed 9 percent electricity rate increase will be shifted away from commercial customers is not accurate, according to state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee.

Western Massachusetts Electric Co. is actually "increasing everything, including their rhetoric," he insisted.

In a call to The Eagle yesterday, Hodgkins said the real increase will be closer to 18 percent. He claimed that the increase could cost Mead Corp.'s Specialty Paper Division in Lee, for example, an additional $200,000 annually. The economy, he insisted, cannot stand further increases.

In a speech Wednesday in West Springfield, Northeast Utilities president and chief operating officer Bernard Fox said WMECO officials have asked state regulators to ease the rate-increase burden on commercial and industrial customers because "the goal for the region has got to be job retention and job creation." Northeast Utilities is the parent company of WMECO, which provides electricity to much of Central and South Berkshire County. Power in other areas of the county is supplied by the Massachusetts Electric Co.

Charges mismanagement

But Northeast Utilities, Hodgkins claimed, is mismanaged and " ratepayers have to bear the burden of all their boondoggles." At the same time, he continued, shareholders earned a 12 percent return on investment this year, and they should bear some of the burden of reduced demand and lower profits in a weak economy.

of the state. The legislation would restrict utility rate increases in areas where the current unemployment rate exceeds the average statewide unemployment rate by 2 percent or more.

The entire Berkshire County legislative delegation, including Hodgkins, has agreed to cosponsor the bill with Kelly.

Hodgkins said he will meet next week with representatives of the Department of Public Utilities and the attorney general's office to discuss the proposed rate increase and the utility's operating record.

When the rate increase was proposed in December, WMECO said it would raise the average residential customer's monthly bill for 500 kilowatt hours from about $62 to about $70.

Public hearings on the proposed rate increase will be held in February. The hearing in Berkshire County will be on Feb. 10 at 7:30 in the Pittsfield High School auditorium. Additional hearings will be in Springfield Feb. 11 and Greenfield Feb. 12.

WMECO has an "electricity glut," Hodgkins said, with "one of the highest excess capacities in the Northeast" and even in times of reduced consumer demand can sell its excess capacity to others.

Despite a heavy involvement in atomic power, Hodgkins said, NU has not shut down its fossil fuel plants, which provide the excess power for sale, even while ratepayers had to pay a surcharge for fossil fuel. In addition to its Millstone 1, 2 and 3 plants, Hodgkins said, NU owns stock in the nuclear operations of Connecticut Yankee, Yankee Atomic (whose plant is in Rowe), Maine Yankee and Vermont Yankee.

State Rep. Shaun P. Kelly, R-Dalton, is sponsoring legislation that would regulate utility rates in economically depressed areas

Lahey reappointed to state advisory board

LEE — Edward M. Lahey, a member of the Lee School Committee, has been reappointed to serve on the Massachusetts Association of School Committees' Advisory Committee on Athletics.

Members of the committee review the operation of interscholastic athletics and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association and make recommendations to the MASC board of directors.

Lahey, who has been a school committee member for 12 years, is now its chairman. MASC is an organization that serves school committees throughout the state.

Eagle 1/26/92

THE CLAN GREGOR SOCIETY
New England Chapter, Inc.

George W. MacGregor, Chairman
295 Salem Street
Malden, Massachusetts 02148

January 26th, 1992

John Alexander MacGregor
Wee Hoose In The Glen
Greylock Street
Lee, Massachusetts 01238

Dear Jack:

It is with great pleasure that I inform you that the New England Chapter of the Clan Gregor Society has select you to be our Guest of Honor at the 321st Rob Roy MacGregor Birthday Celebration. This annual event will again be held in Fitchburg, Massachusetts on March 7th, 1992.

Your dedication to "Things Scottish", loyalty to your Clan and heritage, service to the Scottish arts, perseverance in bringing excellence to piping and to Pipe Bands and your on-going service as, "An Ambassador of Clan Gregor" amounts to a shining example deserving of recognition. That you have accomplished so much and all the while maintaining your individuality and your quiet manor only increases the respect you have earned.

This is not a one way street. That you would allow your clan to pay you this tribute, use your good name as our Guest of Honor and have you say a few words to us on the evening of March 7th, will be just another service you are performing for Clan Gregor. By honoring you we will be teaching the younger generations of our Clan what one person can do with his love of heritage. You will again be the teacher...a role you have often played.

At the January 5th, 1992 Meeting of Council it was voted to establish an annual scholarship to be awarded to a promising young piper. That Annual award is to be known as, "The John Alexander MacGregor Piping Scholarship". This scholarship will be awarded annually in conjunction with the YOUTH AND THE SCOTTISH CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAM. On March 7th this award will be presented for the first time and we would be honored if you would consent to present this award. The Scholarship Committee of The Clan Gregor Society, New England Chapter will select the winner of this Scholarship and it is the wishes of the Clan that the annual recipients will be inspired to aspire to your goals of excellence. Thank you for setting so high a standard of inspiration.

On March 7th we would be pleased to have you seated at our head table along with your two daughters. As I talk on occasion with your daughter, Joanne Ahern, I trust that she will be happy to convey any messages to me. Until March 7th, I will make it my business to organize a program worthy of your standards.

Yours Aye.

George W. MacGregor

Obituaries / B2
For the Record / B2
TV/Radio / B10
Comics / B11
Community Notes / B12

Eagle 1/28/92

Photos by Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee High Principal Richard Salinetti, left, says condom machines shouldn't be installed in school.

Debating condom distribution in Lee

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — It was an emotionally and morally divided group of parents, teachers and school leaders who met last night in the school superintendent's office to debate whether the schools, families or Joe's Diner should provide condoms to sexually active teen-agers.

The meeting of the Health Advisory Council, convened to discuss whether Lee High School should help prevent the spread of the AIDS virus by installing condom-vending machines in its bathrooms, drew 25 people, including three students.

Matter of privacy

From the perspective of Michael and Paul Consolati, Lee High seniors, the issue is one of privacy.

"I happen to know about 70 people who'd feel very comfortable if there were condoms in the bathroom," said Michael Consolati.

His brother added that "it's embarrassing talking about this issue, but it's 20 times more embarrassing walking into the pharmacy. . . ."

Medical, moral and emotional issues carried the meeting, from the briefly mentioned suggestion of abstinence to the idea of installing vending machines in the schools and other places in town where young people congregate.

In the middle, however, were the gray areas.

There were concerns that parents don't talk to their teen-agers about sex, so the schools are being "dumped on" to pick up where parents leave off; that condom machines would promote promiscuity; that condoms do not always work; that teens can buy condoms at local

LEE, continued on B5

Judith Olds, a School Committee member and parent of a teen-age son, said Lee 'can't keep its head in the sand forever.'

Advocate 1/29/92

town topics

Lee school budget up 4.9 percent

The Lee School Committee is considering a $4.87 million budget for 1992-93 that represents a 4.9 percent increase over this year's budget.

School Superintendent Henry Zukowski says the bulk of the increases are for contracted salary increases, health insurance and unemployment benefits.

To lessen the impact of those increases, deep cuts have been made in the budget for supplies and textbooks. Zukowski adds that a savings of $15,000 to $30,000 may be made by eliminating some school bus routes. School officias are also considering cutting the summer school program, Zukowski says.

Despite those cuts, Zukowski says that it is unlikely the school budget will meet the 2.5 percent limit for increasing the budget imposed by the Lee Finance Committee and Selectmen unless a faculty position is eliminated.

Lester cleared from FTL controversy

Hoping to clear up a persistant rumor, Robert Frusciente presented documentary proof to the Lee selectmen Monday that the *L* in his company FTL Inc. does not stand for Building Inspector Robert Lester.

Frusciente says the rumor -- which he says was spread by town officials -- has damaged his business because of the conflict of interest that would have existed if it were true. Timothy Taylor, who first started the FTL construction company, says the *L* stands for his wife, Linda.

"If I had ever in my wildest imagination could have imagined that the small minds of Lee thought the *L* stood for Lester, because I happened to do business at his (former) hardware store, then I would have made it Z," Taylor says.

Frusciente demanded a public apology from Zoning Board of Appeals member George Frulla and Department of Public Works Chairman John L. Piacquadio for spreading the rumor that had no real basis. Frulla said he had once asked a person if the rumor was true, and apologized if there was a misunderstanding. Piacquadio walked out of the meeting without giving an apology.

Lee may add 20 days to school year

Advocate 1/29/92

Hoping to take one step to improve American competitiveness, Lee School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski has proposed extending the school year in Lee by 20 days.

Zukowski's plan, which is only in the preliminary discussion stage, calls for having a 200-day school year by 1998. Lee, like almost all other communities in the United States, now has a 180-day school year.

"We have to revamp our education system to be competitive with the other industrial nations," Zukowski says. "Extending the school is one of the first things that would have to be done. It would have to be done through the cooperation of the faculty and School Committee and it would take several years to develop."

In Japan, Zukowski says, the school year is 220 days and the Japanese Ministry of Education recently voted to increase it to 257 days. High school students spend 9 1/2 hours a day at school.

While Zukowski says he does not plan to imitate the Japanese educatio system, he says changes must be made for Lee and other school systems in the United States to effectively compete.

He acknowledges that carrying out the changes may be difficult and costly but he says his long-term goal is to bring about the reforms before he retires. One of the largest obstacles would be financial. Increasing the school year would mean increasing pay for faculty who would be required to work longer. But Zukowski says he believes agreements can be reached and that more and more people are becoming committed to education as an investment.

"A lot of these ideas have worked," he says. "I don't know if I'm a dreamer, but it's got to be done one way or another."

Zukowski says he would like to extend the school year 10 days at a time. Rather

Continued on page 23

Zukowski wants to extend school year

Continued from page 1

school year 10 days at a time. Rather than simply tack on 10 days to the school year, Zukowski says he would like in fiscal 1995 to have teachers work an extra 10 days to develop curriculum programs for the extended school year.

Then in fiscal 1996, he says, both students and teachers would be in the classroom for 190 days. In 1997, teachers would work 200 days with the final 10 days being devoted to developing curriculum for 10 more days of classes. In 1998, Zukowski says, both students and faculty would attend school for 200 days.

"I want to see how it works," Zukowski says. "I would like to see the teachers develop the curriculum themselves. What I don't want to see is teachers dealing with the same matter over an extended amount of time. I want our schools to utilize all the modern technology that is available and apply them to all of our programs."

"I don't think it would be that difficult to do," he says. "But I do think it should be up to the teachers to develop their own programs. Imagine what it would be like for them to have 10 extra days to teach whatever they like. I think there are a lot of possibilities for creativity. We have to give teachers a chance to come up with what should be done, otherwise it's not going to work.

"I realize we're talking big bucks but I think you'll find teachers will be willing to consider it and I think a lot of people will agree that it has to be done," Zukowski says.

Advocate 1/29/92

Locker Room in jeopardy

The Lee selectmen instructed Building Inspector Robert Lester Monday to take The Locker Room Sports Bar and Lounge on Main Street to court, if the business does not comply with a list of requirements by the end of this week.

Lester informed the business two months ago that it would have to comply with a series of corrective measures in order to keep its temporary certificate of occupancy. The list included installing safety equipment in the kitchen, providing a parking plan and complying with other town regulations.

"The progress has been zero," Lester reported to the selectmen Monday.

"If they haven't done what they were supposed to do, then Mr. Lester will have to do with what he has to do," Selectman Diane Roosa says, adding that action could eventually result in closing down the popular but controversial downtown bar.

In a related matter, The Spotlight bar and restaurant in East Lee promised to limit parking at its establishment to the west side of its parking lot after dinner hours, to lessen the impact of unruly and loud patrons disturbing neighbors.

Neighbors of the bar say that conditions at the Route 20 business have improved since it came under new ownership, but they say that problems with loud noise, fights and late-night disturbances continue.

Advocate 1/29/92

64

Ken Labier guides Lee Ambulance squad to success

By Erik Bruun

Once upon a time, an ambulance squad had a single job. All it was supposed to do was pick up a sick, injured or ailing person and then drive him or her to the hospital.

"It was load'em and go," says Kenneth Labier of Lee. "That was the technology of the day. You brought a person to the hospital and it was 'Thank you very much. Goodbye.' Today they want to know what happened. We're part of the patient's recovery. We've become part of the team."

As director of the volunteer Lee Ambulance Service for 18 of the last 22 years, Labier has overseen the evolution of ambulance squads from stretcher bearers to trained life savers.

And last week, the town learned that the Lee squad, which is entirely volunteer, had moved up a notch in its capabilities. The state has upgraded the 32-person squad from basic life support to advanced life support-intermediate.

The promotion came about after two volunteers, Shawn Burns and Jim Scolforo, passed a 460-hour program raising their medical response certification. A third volunteer, Kevin Palmer, already has the designation, Labier says. The change means the ambulance squad can offer intravenous services to patients as well as employ certain other invasive measures.

While Labier is quick to give credit to Burns, Scolforo, Palmer and other volunteers for the successes of the volunteer ambulance squad, many others in town say the root of the accolades should go to Labier.

Lee Volunteer Ambulance Service Director Kenneth Labier *has been director of the squad for 18 of the last 23 years. At his side has been long-time volunteer Neil Merwin.*

"Ken is one of the main reasons we have such an active and successful squad," says Neil Merwin, a Lee volunteer emergency medical technician for 23 years. Merwin served a short stint as director of the ambulance squad.

"He's done a hell of a job. I know from doing it what a pain-in-the-neck job it is. There are always problems, especially because you're dealing with volunteers so can't just order them around. Trying to deal with everything is just a nightmare. We're very forutnate we've had Ken doing it for so long," Merwin says.

Labier, however, downplays his role. He joined the squad in 1968 shortly after moving from Springfield where he worked in a hospital emergency room. Joining the town's ambulance squad -- which less than a year earlier had been run by Kelly Funeral Home -- seemed like a good way to help the town.

And 2,325 emergency calls later, Labier says he has not changed his attitude.

"I like to think that doing this is a way to serve the community," Labier says. "Saving lives? Every once in a while you get lucky and that's always good. But the real reason people do it is to get the satisfaction of doing something good for the community. It's not the kind of thing you do for the glory and the praise because you're not going to find it."

In fact, Labier says, volunteer ambulance squads often have to put up with criticism and abuse.

"You see people at their worst and you have to put with it. The easy way out is to say 'If you don't like it then get out.' But that's not an answer. The person who just sits on the bus and never gets out says that," Labier says.

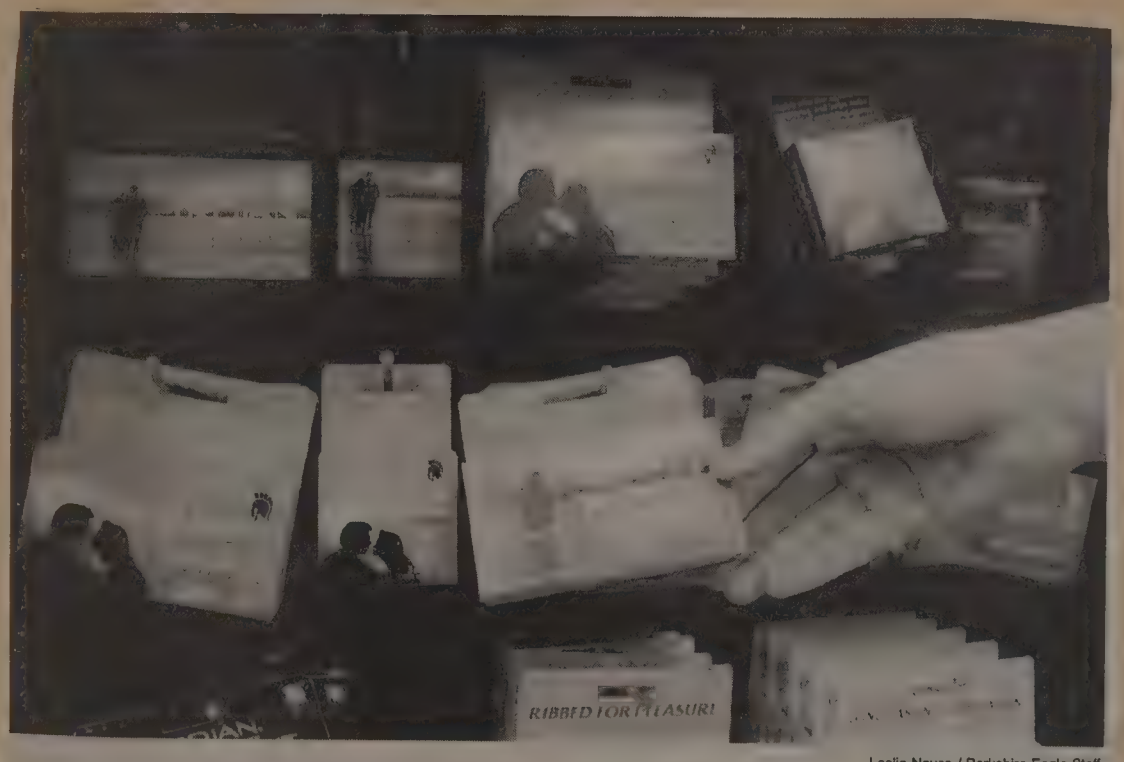
Although Labier responded to close to 100 calls last year, labier says his primary responsibility now is to oversee the ambulance squad by making sure there are enough volunteers available especially on weekdays, organizing supplies and equipment for the squad, ensuring that everyone has the proper certification and generally making sure everything goes smoothly.

Labier says he has never stopped to count the number of hours he works but estimates that he averages spending 25 hours a week doing volunteer work for the ambulance. He credits the patience of his wife, Karen, and the flexibility of his job at the town wastewater treatment plant for being able to devote the hours that he does to the volunteer job.

"Years ago I could answer why I do it so much but now I don't know. It's become part of my life and I just continue with it," he says. "There are good people who work here. I look at my job now as being on the administrative level. I'm beyond the learning stage."

But Labier has directed the ambulance squad from its rudimentary beginnings when knowledge of first aid was considered a plus for an emergency worker to the present-day technology of a sophisticated medical team.

"The technology and attitude have drastically changed over the years," Labier says. "The importance of prehospital care has been recognized and improved. The level of training and requirements has increased drastically."



Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

A self-service display, added last year, now facilitates sale of condoms at McClelland's.

Eagle 1-30-92

Diner's restrooms are source of condoms for Lee teen-agers

Eagle 1-30-92

'I figure that machine saves kids from a lot of grief... and kept a lot of kids out of trouble,' said the owner of Joe's Diner.

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The owner of Joe's Diner figures the condom machines in the restrooms "have kept a lot of kids out of trouble" and, besides that, have saved them the embarrassment of walking into the local pharmacy.

"We sell quite a bit since this AIDS started," said Joe Sorrentino, owner of Joe's Diner for 38 years.

Because the restrooms are private, no one knows for sure who's buying the 50-cent condoms. But Sorrentino said a few years ago he got some letters from local high school students thanking him for making condoms available in the privacy of the restrooms. The men's room machine has been on the wall for seven or eight years, he said.

Despite his own practice, however, he said he doesn't think the local high school is the place for condom vending machines.

"Families should take care of that," he said.

Lee school officials, parents and students are divided over whether condom vending machines should be installed in Lee High School to help prevent the spread of the sexually transmitted virus that causes AIDS.

Some opponents say condoms are already available in a number of different places, such

MACHINES, continued on B7

65

Zukowski: Add 20 more days to school year

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski wants to extend Lee's school year by 20 days by 1998, in order to push Lee students toward greater excellence and competitiveness, he said. "If we're average, that's nothing to be proud of," he said yesterday. "Let's go beyond the standards."

He said his suggestion "is not that unique or radical."

"It's being discussed, but nobody has spelled it out," he said.

His plan, he said, would encourage teachers to use the additional 20 school days for creative and innovative additions to school curriculum.

"What I'm afraid of with an extended year is that schools would take a textbook and cover it in 200 days instead of 180 days," he said.

Phased approach

Zukowski, who has not yet submitted the plan to the School Committee, said his plan would begin phasing in the additional school days in 1995, with teachers adding 10 days of planning time to their school year. In 1996, the students would join the teachers for 10 additional days of instruction, and in 1997, teachers would add another 10 planning days. By 1998, students and teachers would have 20 additional days of school.

The extra 20 days would not be tacked on at either end of the year, he said, but would be added at various times throughout the year, by shortening or eliminating the February vacation or April vacation. In addition, he would suggest sending students back to school before Labor Day.

Carol LePrevost, acting chairman of the Lee School Committee, said any additional teaching time would require negotiations with the Lee Education Association, the union representing Lee teachers. It would cost more money, money that might not be readily available, she said. However, the state as a whole may be headed in the direction of a longer school year, she said.

Her main concern, she said, is that additional school days offer productive enrichment to students.

"Additional days are fine, if you're teaching something new," she said. "I wouldn't be in favor of spending more time on the same textbook."

Teachers want role

Neil F. Clarke, president of the Lee Education Association, said the teachers would want to have a role in implementing any changes that would help improve the school system.

He said he, too, anticipates legislative changes on the state level, but is wary that the state sometimes passes new laws without providing funding.

ZUKOWSKI, continued on B8

School year

Eagle 1/31/92

■ ZUKOWSKI, from B1

"We would want to have a say in what's going on, to meet with legislators and get our concerns out," he said.

Zukowski said Lee is lucky to have supportive parents, whose backing would be needed to implement a longer school year. Not all communities have such family involvement, he said. The plan might not apply to other school districts, he said.

"I think it's extremely important for schools to be competing to do the best possible jobs," said Zukowski. "I want our district to feel we're doing the best possible job. I hope we can do even better than what we're doing."

Mountain Mill due to close

Eagle 1/31/92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Westfield River Paper Co. will shut down its Mountain Mill on Forest Street, where 47 people are employed, according to a union official.

Details of the closing were sketchy yesterday, but Andy Bassett, president of United Paper Workers Local 1499, said company officials told the union that "they can make more money in Russell," where Westfield River operates a larger mill.

"We're going down," Bassett said.

He said the union is "still negotiating" with the company about whether and how many jobs would be eliminated by the closing. He declined to comment further, saying he will know more details next week.

Andrew Chesnes of Ludlow, district representative for the union, said the company is reviewing the union's proposals regarding severance pay and insurance.

Westfield River Paper is owned by Simkin Industries of New Haven, Conn.

Calls to both the Lee and Russell mills were referred to Irvin Coughlin, vice president of human resources at Simkin Industries. He has not returned messages left for him this week.

However, last weekend Coughlin told radio station WSBS in Great Barrington that the Mountain Mill's future was uncertain. He told The Eagle that financial data shared with the union shows that the glassine paper made at the mill could be more profitably produced at the Russell plant.

Glassine paper is used in candy wrappers and other applications.

Westfield River Paper officials met yesterday in Lee at a luncheon meeting at the Morgan House. The union held a meeting at Greenock Country Club.

Wildcats rally to nip Lenox girls, 57-49

Eagle 1/31/92

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Girls' Basketball

Early Millionaire magic took a back seat to some late Lee lightning at the Lenox High gymnasium last night, where the Wildcats extended their winning streak to 47 games with a 57-49 win over Southern Division rival Lenox in Berkshire County girls' basketball. The game was played before an overflow crowd of about 800.

Lee, which defeated Lenox at home 47-35 on Jan. 20, now has a two-game lead in the division.

Lenox thrilled the home crowd by taking a 28-20 lead at halftime. Millionaires center Samantha Herrick had a brilliant first half, scoring 21 points and taking in 17 rebounds. The Wildcats, however, used their familiar pressure defense and the dead-eye shooting of Katie Cinella, Jen Finnegan and Allison Forfa to earn the come-from-behind win.

Herrick, who finished with 33 points, is now 44 points away from beating the all-time Berkshire County scoring record held by former Lenox player Lisa Boenitz, who finished with 1,810 points. Herrick now has 1,767.

Also last night, Drury's Heather Zoltek sparked a 42-40 overtime win against St. Joseph's while Northern Division leader Taconic toughed out a 51-44 win over Wahconah. Hoosac Valley, meanwhile, defeated Mount Everett 48-36, Mount Greylock toppled McCann 40-19 and Amherst decisioned Pittsfield 66-49 in a non-league game.

Lee 57, Lenox 49

LENOX — Ten straight points by Herrick near the end of the first half helped give Lenox its largest lead of the game, 22-12. The Wildcats, trailing by eight points at halftime, refused to panic.

"We were only down by eight," said Lee's Finnegan. "We weren't in there thinking we were going to lose. It's not like we're cocky, but we did have a positive attitude. We just wanted to come out as strong as we could."

The Lenox lead dissolved quickly. In a 13-3 Lee run to start the second half, Finnegan hit two jumpers, Cinella had two baskets including a trey while Forfa (team-high 15 points) also buried a couple of jumpers. The result was a 33-31 Lee lead.

Michelle Maturevich scored for Lenox to tie the game. But the

GIRLS, continued on C3

64

Lee streak now 47;

■ GIRLS, from C1

Wildcats took command with a 10-point run keyed by two three-point shots from Cinella.

Herrick, who was kept under control throughout most of the second half, scored her first two points of the stanza from the foul line with six minutes left in the game. Herrick, seemingly with her second wind, scored Lenox's next 10 points, as the Millionaires closed to within 51-45 with 1:20 left.

Lenox's Sherry Zabian hit a three-point shot to make the score 53-48 with 35 seconds remaining. But Lee's A.J. Skowron kept a Lenox comeback at bay in the final minute by hitting six straight free throws.

"We played a little bit more man-to-man defense in the second half," Lee coach Tom Cinella said. "In the first half we weren't making Sam [Herrick] work hard enough to get the ball."

Lenox coach Fred Lafave needed only to look at the stat sheet to see what happened in the second half. The Millionaires had six turnovers in the first stanza but 14 in the second half.

"Turnovers and we couldn't get the ball to Sam," said Lafave.

Lee won the jayvee game, 32-9.

Drury 42, St. Joe 40 (OT)

NORTH ADAMS — The Blue Devils, who trailed 31-24 after leading at halftime 21-14, needed two foul shots from Zoltek with two seconds left in regulation to force the game into overtime at 38-38.

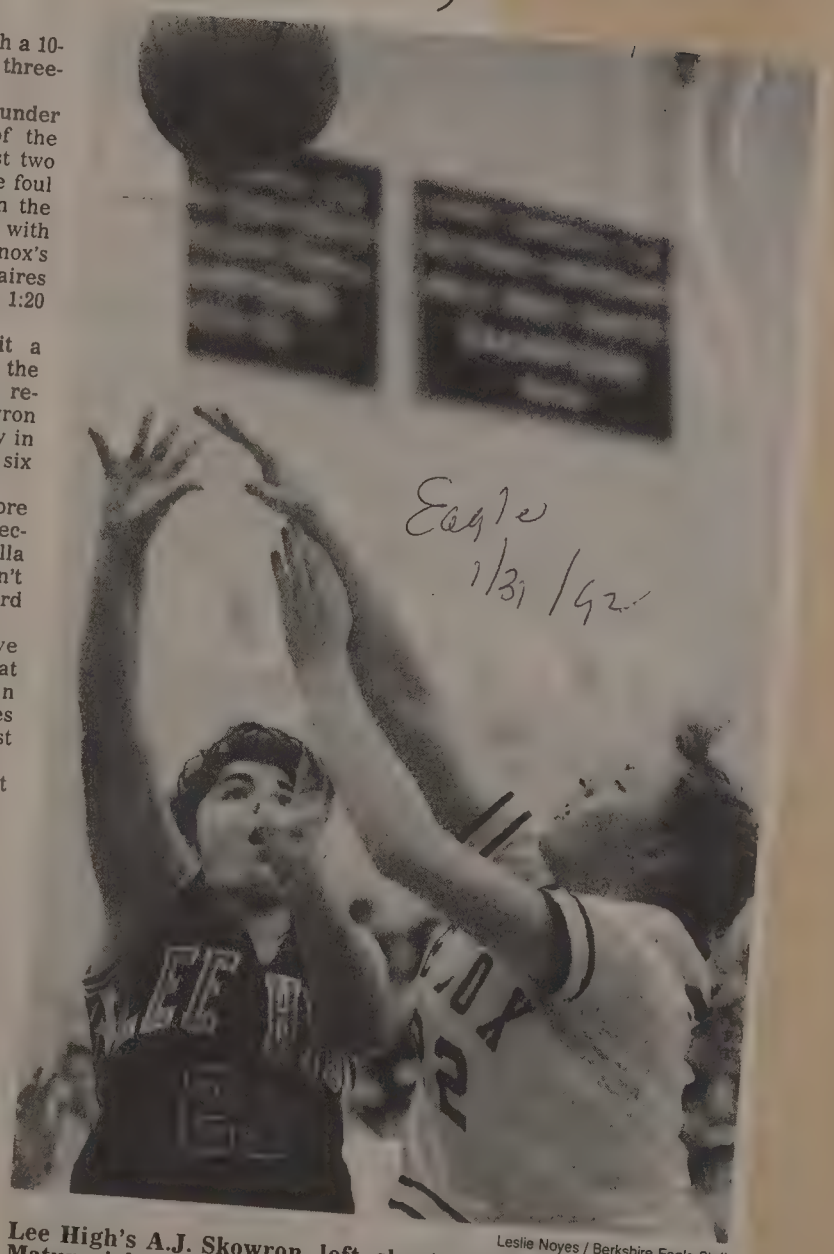
"We missed 24 [foul shots] tonight," Drury coach John Estes said. "But Heather made two when we needed them."

Scoring was limited in the extra session. Betsey Sherman converted a foul shot and Zoltek nailed a trey to give Drury a 42-38 lead. Stephanie Koperniak made two free throws for the Crusaders to complete the scoring.

Zoltek, who had a game-high 15 points, was tough down the stretch in regulation. The Drury guard made a three-point basket to begin the march back from the 31-24 deficit. After St. Joe's Bridget Keator (team-high 14 points) made a basket for a 36-34 lead, Zoltek hit two free throws to tie the game at 36-36.

Lisa DeVergilio's basket made the score 38-36 for St. Joseph's, setting up Zoltek's heroics at the foul line with two seconds left.

Drury won the jayvee game, 40-27.



Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee High's A.J. Skowron, left, shoots over Lenox's Michelle Maturevich last night at the Lenox High gymnasium. The visiting Wildcats trailed 28-20 at halftime, but kept their unbeaten streak alive at 47 games with a come-from-behind 57-49 win. Skowron helped the comeback with 10 of her 14 points coming in the second half.

Wildcats hang tough, 52-49

Feb '92

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee ran its winning streak to 48 games, using a tough-down-the-stretch performance to cap a 52-49 win at Taconic last night in Berkshire County girls' basketball.

The Braves, who trailed in the game 27-21 at halftime, had crept to within one point of the Wildcats twice in the second half, finally tying the game 45-45 on Kelly Daigneault's basket with 2:14 remaining. But Jen Finnegan, who was 10 of 12 at the foul line, hit four straight points from the charity stripe and A.J. Skowron buried a runner across the lane to give Lee a 51-47 lead with 48 seconds left.

Taconic's Jamie Murphy, who had a game-high 18 points, hit two free throws with 43 seconds remaining to cut the Lee lead to 51-49. Skowron then buried the first of a one-and-one foul shot with seven seconds left for a 52-49 lead. The second attempt missed, however, and Taconic pushed the ball upcourt, where Mickie Turner's three-point attempt at the buzzer went long.

The Braves had one timeout to burn after the Skowron miss, but Taconic coach Joe Racicot passed on that opportunity.

"Lee's tougher when they get a chance to set up," Racicot said. "And seven seconds is a long time."

"All in all, a pretty good victory," Lee coach Tom Cinella said. "The final score indicated we came to play. But Taconic came to play, too."

Elsewhere, Lenox defeated McCann Tech 68-12. Millionaires forward Samantha Herrick scored 31 points to move her career total to 1,798 points. Herrick now needs 13 points to break the all-time Berkshire County scoring record held by former Lenox player Lisa Boenitz, who finished her careeer with 1,810. Lenox's next game is home on Friday night against Wahconah.

Girls' Basketball

Also last night, Pittsfield moved within one game of Taconic in the Northern Division race with a 46-38 win over Hoosac while Wahconah topped Monument Mountain 54-35. Mount Everett beat St. Joseph's 41-38 and Mount Greylock had the measure of Drury 46-33.

Lee 52, Taconic 49

PITTSFIELD — It was the second straight impressive road performance for the Wildcats, who defeated division rival Lenox 57-49 last Thursday after trailing in that game 28-20 at halftime.

"It was like any other game on the ride up," said Lee center Sheila Collins. "We've got a lot of confidence and don't give up on ourselves."

Added Finnegan, "We like competitive games, and we knew this would be a tough one. Taconic's height bothered us, but our foul shooting helped us out tonight."

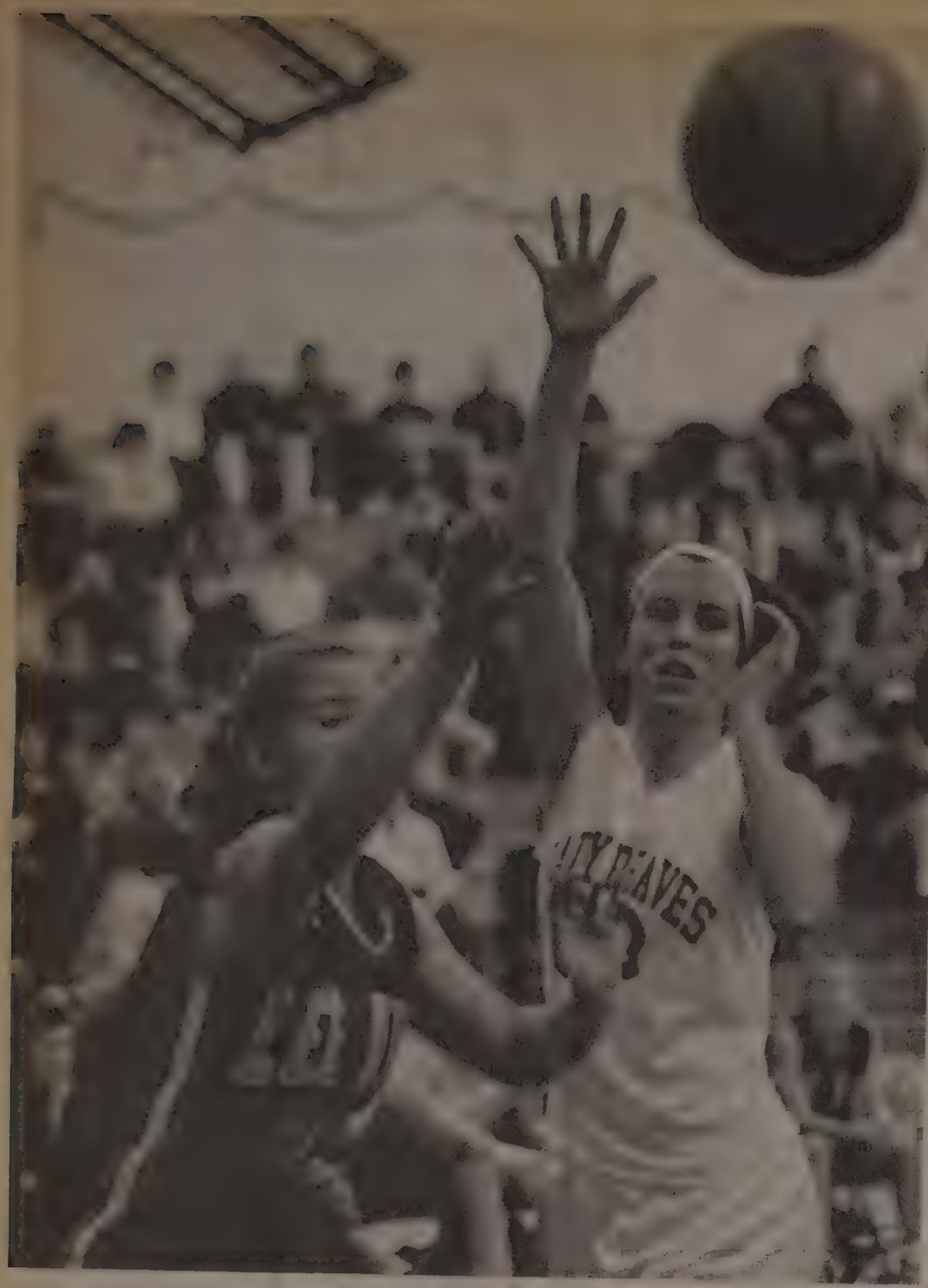
Lee defeated Taconic 66-51 in a non-league contest back on Dec. 27. It was a game that Racicot said the Braves learned from.

"We gained some confidence from that first time," Racicot said. "And you come into this game knowing what they're going to throw at you."

Murphy's three-point shot gave Taconic an early 10-6 lead. But a layup by Skowron capped a 17-4 Lee run and gave the visitors a 23-14 lead. Taconic trimmed that margin to two points (23-21), but the Wildcats scored the final four points of the first half, the final hoop a wild left-handed hook in the lane by right-handed Lee guard Katie Cinella.

Murphy, who had 13 points in the second half, had seven of those markers early in the second

GIRLS, continued on A8



Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

The battle in the paint last night at Taconic showcased Lee's Sheila Collins, left, and Taconic's Kelly Daigneault. The visiting Wildcats extended their winning streak to 48 games with a thrilling 52-49 victory.

Schmidinger boosts bid for Olympics

Feb 2 1992

14th in downhill; Team named today

GRINDELWALD, Switzerland — Krista Schmidinger of Lee, Mass., may have taken a giant step toward a U.S. Olympic team berth yesterday by finishing 14th — and second best among U.S. skiers — in the final World Cup downhill race before the Olympics.

Schmidinger, 21, matched her best World Cup finish of the season when she completed yesterday's race in one minute, 52.21 seconds. Hilary Lindh of Juneau, Alaska, was 11th in 1:51.93, the best finish by a U.S. woman in a World Cup downhill this season. Next best after Schmidinger among U.S. skiers were Megan Gerety, 21st in 1:52.51; Edith Thys, 35th in 1:53.23; and Picabo Street, 43rd in 1:53.47.

"I really needed a good race today to make the Olympic team," Schmidinger said. "I've had another 14th [Dec. 21 in Serre Chevalier, France], so hopefully this will help."

Yesterday's finish vaulted Schmidinger past Thys and their U.S. teammate Kristin Krone in the World Cup downhill standings. After five races, Lindh leads the U.S. contingent in 16th place with 111 points. Schmidinger is

Krista Schmidinger
Fingers crossed today

now 22nd with 50, Thys 23rd with 47 and Krone 24th with 45.

The U.S. Olympic team will be named today at noon.

With yesterday's World Cup points, Schmidinger also passed Pittsfield's slalom specialist Heidi Voelker in the overall World Cup standings for the first

CUP, continued on C

Schmidinger boosts Olympic c

Feb 2

■ CUP, from C1

time this season. Among U.S. skiers with overall World Cup points, Diann Roffe leads in 11th place with 376, Eva Twardokens is 12th with 344, Julie Parisien 17th with 289, Lindh 39th with 131, Krone 46th with 100, Thys 61st with 54, Schmidinger 62nd with 50 and Voelker 68th with 43.

Voelker is scheduled to compete here today in the final World Cup slalom before the Olympics.

Austrian wins race

In an event often decided by hundredths of seconds, Sabine Ginther won yesterday's downhill by a whopping 1.27 seconds.

Ginther, an Austrian who will be 22 tomorrow, took advantage of a comparatively flat course for her third World Cup victory. She won downhills at Lake Louise, Canada, and Vail, Colo., last year.

"It was a good course for me," said Ginther, who was sixth in the downhill at last year's World Championships. "There were little technical things for me."

Ginther, second in a downhill three weeks ago at Schruns, Austria, was timed in 1 minute, 49.72 seconds. Miriam Vogt of Germany was second in 1:50.99.

It was by far the biggest margin of victory in any of the five women's downhills this season. The widest previous margin was less than two-thirds of a second.

Chantal Bournissen of Switzerland finished third in 1:51.14. Germany's Regina Haeusl was fourth and reigning world champion Petra Kronberger of Austria placed fifth.

The women will compete in the slalom today, then most will take a few days off before going to Meribel, France, for the Olympics. Today's slalom will be added to the results of yesterday's downhill to determine a combined event.

Swiss men sweep

MEGEVE, France (AP) — Paul Accola won a men's super giant slalom yesterday, leading a 1-2-3 Swiss sweep.

"It's an incredible win since I made a big mistake at the top," Accola said, after being timed in 1 minute, 28.85 seconds. "I was convinced after it that I would have no chance to get a good result and I attacked harder at the bottom."

Marco Hangl was second in 1:29.09, just ahead of downhill specialist Franz Heinzer, third in 1:29.18.

Guenther Mader of Austria was fourth in 1:29.26, with Norwegian Ole Christian Furuseth fifth in 1:29.46. Marc Girardelli of Luxembourg and Jan Einar Thorsen of Norway tied for sixth at 1:29.56.

It was Accola's third individual victory of the season but first since November.

He also has won three combined events, adding results of a downhill and a slalom.

Yesterday's victory increased Accola's lead in the men's World Cup standings. He has 1,370 points, compared to 1,060 for runner-up Alberto Tomba of Italy. Girardelli, a four-time overall

Voelker, Schmidinger set for Olympic challenge

Eagle 2-3-92

By Bob McDonough
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Just call it the All-Berkshire Olympic Games.

With yesterday's announcement that Heidi Voelker of Pittsfield and Krista Schmidinger of Lee have been named to the alpine ski squad, the Berkshire County list for the 1992 Winter Olympic Games in Albertville, France, grew to five.

Joining Voelker and Schmidinger in Albertville will be Jim Curran, a 33-year-old Drury High graduate from Stamford, Vt., who will compete in cross country; Pittsfield native David Tretowicz, a defenseman for the U.S. hockey team (although the team still hasn't made its final cut); and North Adams resident Don DelNegro, a trainer for the U.S. bobsled and luge teams.

But the eyes of Berkshire County will be mostly on Meribel, France, where Voelker and Schmidinger will cheer each other's efforts as they race down a mountain in separate alpine ski racing events.

"I saw her at the race today and wished her good luck," said Voelker, who competed alongside Schmidinger yesterday in a World Cup slalom race in Grindelwald, Switzerland. "She's not one to show much emotion, but she was very excited."

All of Berkshire County can join in that excitement today, since this marks the first time it has been represented by two skiers in the same Olympic Games.

Another swimsuit edition?

This time last year, Voelker proved that some of her best skiing comes under the greatest pressure. While her Marine Corps brother was fighting in Operation Desert Storm, she came through with an eighth-place finish in the slalom at the World Championships, her best finish ever in major world-class competition. As a result, she got her photo splashed in Sports Illustrated and took a lot of teasing because it turned up in the annual swimsuit issue.

"Maybe this year they'll let be pose with a gold medal with my swimsuit on," Voelker joked in December.

Berkshire fans shouldn't be too disappointed if their skiers come up a little short of the medal podium, however. Voelker's best finish ever was the eighth in the World Championships, and her best this season in the World Cup was a 12th in December. Schmidinger's career best was ninth in a downhill last year and 14th twice this year.

Voelker knows she has been in a slalom slump of late, and that continued yesterday when she fell on her first run at Grindelwald. Her best finishes in January were 21st and 26th.

Asked about his Olympic expectations for Voelker, U.S. women's head coach Paul Major said yesterday, "To be honest, they're low, because she has not had a very good year so far.

"She's in a little bit of a slump," Major continued. "She's got a great attitude, and she's very focused. . . She's got great potential, but we've got to get it out of her in the next couple of weeks."

"I'm a little frustrated," Voelker admitted. She said that during early-season training, she was battling head to head with No. 1 U.S. slalom specialist Julie Parisien. But while Parisien has gone on to place 10th in World Cup slalom standings, Voelker has fallen to 29th.

"When that happens, it makes you frustrated," Voelker said. "You start saying to yourself, 'Where's it gone?' I know I have the capability, but I need to find that fine line.

"When I was younger, I'd have these ups and downs and come out of the downs sooner. But this has been the longest one. I don't know if it's pressure or high expectations or what, but it makes you want to put your head through a wall."

Second time for Voelker

Despite her slump, Voelker expects things to run a little smoother in her second shot at the Olympics. In 1988, she was a surprise selection after several U.S. skiers were injured, and as the youngest team member at age 18, she fell on her first run in the slalom and in her second run in the GS.

"I think I'll have that much more of an edge on some of the girls because I'm not going to be so much in awe," she said in a recent interview. "Now I know what it will be like, and it will be easier to know where my time has to be spent."

Schmidinger on the rise

While Voelker is trying to work out of her slump, Schmidinger is on the rise on the downhill circuit. The 1990 U.S. Super-G champion, Schmidinger has been climbing the World Cup ranks in only her second full year of downhill competition. She also has a solid background in the technical events, slalom and giant slalom, and that's what led to her selection to the combined event at the Olympics.

Her 14th-place finish in Saturday's downhill "definitely gives her a lot of confidence," Major said. As for her progress as a downhiller, he said, "it's been quick progress, so that shows she's very talented. We have high expectations."

Saturday's downhill course in Switzerland was relatively flat, but Major said the challenge of a steeper Olympic course in Meribel shouldn't be any problem for Schmidinger.

"The course was not difficult here," he said, "but

C-3 missing

OLYMPICS, continued on C3

Two Berkshire skiers land berth

Eagle Feb 3-92

Voelker, Schmidinger will com

Krista Schmidinger
Lee skier in Olympic debut

By Bob McDonough
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Now it's official: Heidi Voelker of Pittsfield and Krista Schmidinger of Lee will be skiing in the 1992 Winter Olympics.

Voelker, 22, and Schmidinger, 21, were among 22 skiers named yesterday to the U.S. Olympic team that will compete Feb. 8-23 in Albertville, France. It will be the second straight Olympic appearance for Voelker, who skied the slalom and giant slalom in Calgary in 1988, and it marks the Olympic debut for Schmidinger.

"I'm definitely psyched," said the usually calm Schmidinger, reached yesterday at her hotel in Grindelwald, Switzerland. A seven-year veteran of the U.S. Ski Team, Schmidinger admitted she needed a solid finish in Saturday's final pre-Olympic downhill in order to qualify, and she came through with a 14th-place finish.

"I was definitely on the brink before that," Schmidinger said.

At Albertville — or more specifically, at Meribel, the alpine ski venue — Voelker will compete in only the slalom Feb. 20. Television viewers in the United States will be able to watch that live on CBS from 7 to 9 a.m.

"I'm a little disappointed not being in th

Olympic ties

Skiers Heidi Voelker and Krista Schmidinger head a five-member contingent of present or former Berkshire residents involved in the coming Winter Olympics. *Story, Page C1.*

Lee and Greylock tighten things up

Eagle Feb 4 1992

By Howard Herman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — Thanks to the Lee High boys and the Mount Greylock girls, the Berkshire County alpine ski championships will be decided in a winner-take-all slalom next Monday.

Matt Clark's first-place finish last night at the Bousquet Ski Area led the Lee boys to their first-ever varsity victory, defeating Monument Mountain in a slalom event 185.45 to 191.27. League leader Pittsfield was fifth, and coupled with Taconic finishing second, thrust the Braves into first place. Taconic leads PHS and Monument by a point and Lee by five points.

Alpine Skiing

Courtney Landry claimed the girls' race and helped power the Mounties to their second win of the season, beating Taconic 219.21 to 220.63. Because of the narrow victory and Pittsfield finishing fourth, the Generals and Braves are now tied for first, with Greylock four points back in third.

"It's still a ball game," said Taconic coach Ron Estes. "Whoever has four good runs wins this thing."

Boys' race

Clark, who finished first in the opening giant slalom of the year, had little competition last night. His 43.25 was more than two seconds faster than Monument's Bob Tracy (45.36) and Eric McCormack (45.62), who was third.

While Clark's time was outstanding, it was the performance of the six Wildcats that helped thrust them into their first ever title.

Clark and B.J. Perfetto (sixth in 46.40) have been at or near the top 10 all year, but David Walker, skiing out of his team's fifth slot, cracked the top 10 at ninth (47.29). Jim Braim (48.51) also recorded a sub-50 second time, insuring the Wildcats of a solid victory.

"A lot of these kids haven't been on the racing circuit for years and years. Getting into high school is their first taste of real competition," said Lee coach Al Hewitt, who was thrilled with his team's performance.

Girls' race

Greylock's Landry is a considered a downhill specialist. But last night, she looked like slalom was her No. 1 discipline.

"In a different way it's more demanding, it's more mental," explained Landry (46.98) after her 2.41 second win over Lee's Mandy Lahey (49.39). "This built my confidence a lot. This is great, it's just what I needed."

The Mounties parlayed

A8 missing

ALPINE, continued on A8

Eagle Feb 5-92

70 Lee students learn about health careers

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Nearly 70 members of Lee High School's freshman class descended on Berkshire Medical Center one day last week to view medical displays in a downstairs dining room, take guided tours of hospital departments and watch a variety of simulations, ranging from respiratory therapy to endoscopic surgery.

From the medical center's standpoint, it was a public-relations opportunity to provide information about the health-care industry to young high-schoolers who can stand to learn, as hospital spokeswoman Sharon Semanie put it, that medicine is more than doctors and nurses.

Broadening horizons

From the high school's standpoint, the visit was a necessary component of an ambitious year-long educational program designed by staff members to broaden freshman horizons and help them shape their futures.

Several students said they already have a pretty good idea what they want to do. Denise Walker, 15, said she wants to become a physical therapist, and for this reason, the hospital trip was "really interesting." She was shown an array of therapies — physical, respiratory, speech, occupational — that make up a corner of the health-care industry.

Jason Marchant, 14, said he is fascinated by medicine and wants to study radiology or neurology. But Joe Baczek, 14, said he is more interested in automotive mechanics, and Ben Simmons, 15, in drafting or architecture.

Fine, said Kathleen Bort, Lee High's dean of students who oversees the program. The hospital visit was not an attempt to steer 14-and 15-year-olds into career paths now but only to show them the variety of skills and interests that make up a single field.

It is a program in its infancy at a time when a number of public school systems, including the one in Pittsfield, are debating the wisdom and necessity of requiring, or helping, students as early as 8th and 9th grades to select a

MEDICINE, continued on B4

Eagle Feb 5-92 Cont,

70 Lee students learn about health careers

■ MEDICINE, from B1

field of study or career path.

Called simply freshman seminar, the Lee High program has just finished the first of two half-year cycles and is concluding a two-week period of workshops on coping skills, goal setting and career exploration — hence the visit to BMC — before the second cycle begins.

As far as Principal Richard T. Salinetti knows, the program is the only one of its kind in South County. Bort says she has not heard of its being duplicated in North County either. The public high schools in Pittsfield provide a career-exploration program for freshmen, but it is optional and is geared strictly to youngsters looking over vocational-technical courses.

The objectives of Lee's program, said Bort, are to:

► Instill in each participant a sense of social responsibility, a sense of responsibility for others as well as for oneself.

► Expand participants' visions of the world through exposure not only to customary course offerings but to a wide array of technological and cultural activities and interests, particularly art and music.

► Involve students in solving problems so that they will become more active participants in their schools and ultimately in their communities.

The freshman seminar has been inserted into what previously was a daily study hall period, and will end with an evaluation conducted by students in large- and small-group discussion sessions, as well as by teachers, in June.

During each of the two half-year cycles, students are divided into four groups of approximately equal size and their time is then divided into four-week blocks to delve into four subject areas: life skills, technology, art and music.

Growth in self-confidence

So far, say Bort and the program's four teachers, it seems to be working well.

In written comments prepared for administrators and parents, life-skills teacher Deborah Maroney says, for example, that her students' self-confidence "has grown throughout."

"When the classes started," said art teacher Holly Darey, "students lacked initiative and were hesitant to show independent thinking." Critiques of fellow students' work were often negative. But that has changed, said Darey.

"During the last critiquing session," she said, "students had many positive remarks and helpful suggestions for each other."

Students "have expressed their creativity by writing songs and singing," observed music teacher Aldonna Girouard. Technology teacher Nicholas Caimano said he found students demonstrating problem-solving skills "through teamwork and inventive thinking."

To meet one objective, for example, students decided to make and market sweatshirts. They bought cloth, made patterns sewed the pieces together and prepared a sales plan. No, it wasn't a duplication of Junior Achievement, the program designed to instruct teen-agers in the elements of capitalism, said Bort. The seminar's emphasis is on teamwork and the individual's contribution to the success of the group as a whole.

"Yes, it challenges the theory of rugged individualism," she said, "but I think we're in a real interface period in this country."

By the time the school's curriculum committee began designing the program a year ago, she said, "we had already talked about it for a year."

Lack of direction

One aim was to end what many teachers found to be an inability among incoming students to find direction as they worked their ways through high school.

Experience showed that most freshmen choose college-preparatory courses but then at the end of the year change to general courses for their sophomore years, said Bort. "Or they sign up for a smattering of courses that don't make much sense."

General courses are usually considered easier than the college-preparatory ones, she continued, and a number of students will sign up for them for that reason, even if they expect to go to college someday. Left to their own devices, she added, some students will sign up for a mixture of courses that may have no particular relationship.

"We would love to see them expand their horizons that way," she said, speaking of the varieties sometimes selected, "but most of the time what they choose doesn't put them in any direction."

The freshman seminar, she said, is designed to change that.

girls team finished in 6th.
Berk Rec Feb 6-92

Baseball Card Club Meets Tuesday

LEE — The Hot Corner Baseball Card Club, sponsored by the Lee Youth Association, will hold its monthly meeting next Tuesday, Feb. 11, at the Lee Community Center on Academy Street.

The meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

A "trade only" night will be held for club members, who are asked to bring their duplicate cards to trade. Anyone joining the club that evening may participate.

The Hot Corner Baseball Card Club's main purpose is to promote baseball card-collecting as a hobby for all ages. The club meets the second Tuesday of every month except July and August.

More information is available from the LYA, Kevin Bartini or Joe Furgal.

170

Hodgkins disputes WMECO's need for rate hike

Eagle Feb 7, 1992

By Gerald B. O'Connor
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The president of Northeast Utilities may say his company's earnings are "abysmal," but an angry Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, said yesterday that its net income of more than $200 million a year for the past three years, the "bloated" $515,000 salary of its chief executive and the expense of its television advertising campaign say otherwise.

Supporting a large hand-lettered sign bearing the signature of "Mr. I.M. Irate," Hodgkins stood in front of the Western Mass. Electric Co. office at 33 West St. and denounced the company and its parent, Northeast Utilities, to a small group of reporters early in the afternoon.

Hearings coming up

It was the latest in a series of actions by Hodgkins and other Berkshire County legislators to challenge a requested 9.4 percent rate increase filed by WMECO last month and scheduled to be aired in public hearings starting next week.

The first hearing will be Monday at 7:30 p.m. at Pittsfield High School in front of the state Public Utilities Commission and presided over by its chairman, Robert Yardley.

Evidence, argued Hodgkins, shows that Northeast is making enough of a return to forgo an increase in its constantly climbing rates at a time when the economic recession is dominating ratepayers' lives.

He quoted from some letters he has received from constituents complaining of soaring WMECO electric bills.

He quoted one writer as saying that "my December bill this year was 92 percent higher than the average of the last five years' December bills," and a retired elderly couple with an electrically heated house as saying their last monthly bill was $665 for a house "completely weatherized" by WMECO so that it is "tight as a drum."

As a result, the couple wrote, "We live almost entirely in the kitchen."

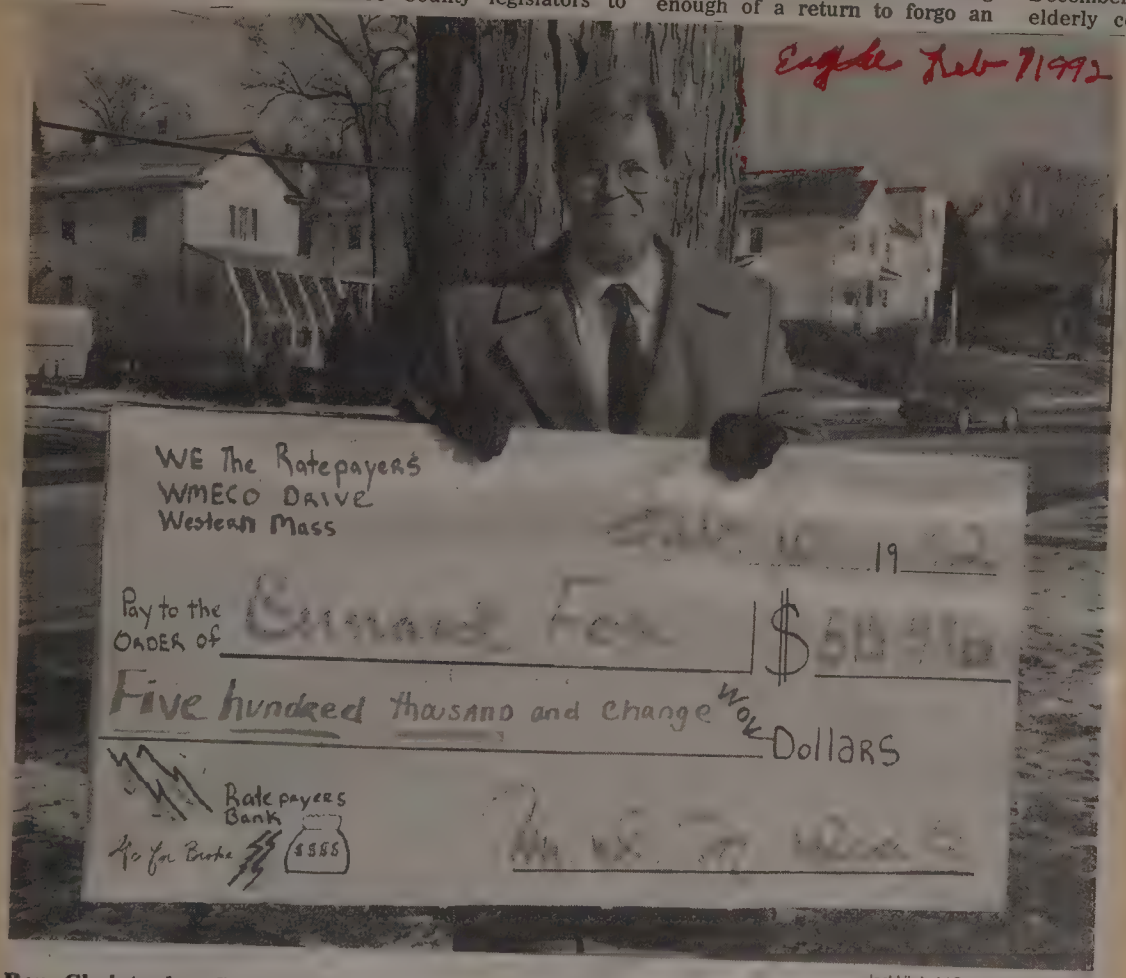
"The case WMECO officials are trying to make to the public is deceitful," Hodgkins charged. "When you consider the hardship [the company] is placing on the elderly and other customers, the salaries that top officers are making is nothing less than immoral."

Attacks rate of return

He contended the average rate of return on investment in the electric utility industry is in the range of 9 percent to 10 percent, but that WMECO at the moment is generating a return of about 12 percent.

"And now they want 13.5," he

HODGKINS, continued on B8



Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins holds sign targeting the salary paid to the chief executive of Northeast Utilities, the parent company of Western Mass. Electric Co.

Hodgkins disputes WMECO's need for rate increase of 9.4 percent

■ HODGKINS

marketing divisions, disruptive

Office opened in Lee by company that assesses environmental damage

Eagle Feb 8-92

By Lewis C. Cuyler
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Associated Environmental Scientists Inc., a 13-year-old West Springfield company specializing in hazardous-materials assessment and civil engineering, has opened an office at 17 Main St., representing an expansion of the company into the Berkshire County market.

In charge of the office is Michael R. Sanginetti, former manager of economic development for the Central Berkshire Chamber of Commerce, who most recently was employed by J.H. Maxymillian Inc. in a job that focused on environmental and permitting aspects of public projects.

Sanginetti said he was laid off at Maxymillian last fall because construction activity had dropped so precipitously. After a period of unemployment, he joined AES in early January. He is the company's vice president of planning and development.

He said that AES was founded in 1978 by Raymond E. Levesque, a former teacher of biology and environmental science, who practiced consulting for architectural and engineering firms as a sideline. He became so busy at the part-time work that he and his wife Catherine established their own firm. The staff has since grown to 15 with the company expanding into a market area that encompasses Western Massachusetts, Southern Vermont and most of Connecticut.

Michael R. Sanginetti

Sanginetti said AES has proved to be recession-proof because of environmental laws that require assessments of the extent of contamination and the design of remediation programs for commercial properties before they can be sold.

A second major source of business revolves around landfills that are being phased out. A third involves the preparation of the environmental impact reports and statements required for major construction projects.

Specifically, he said, AES provides a variety of services relating to wetlands, site analysis, environmental permitting, inventories of wildlife and endangered species, traffic, noise, air pollution, septic systems and lake and stream management.

The company also provides expertise on the state's right-to-know laws regarding the identification of hazardous materials in the workplace.

He said he is currently spending three days a week in the Lee office and two days in West Springfield but expects the Lee operation will build to a staff of four with specialties in hydrology, engineering, hazardous materials and wetlands.

Sanginetti, a Pittsfield resident, is a 1978 graduate of Taconic High School. He earned a business degree in 1983 from North Adams State College. Following his graduation he worked for the Pittsfield Office of Economic and Community Development, performing environmental reviews for the city's block grant projects.

He then became land-use planning consultant and project manager for Westbridge Associates of West Stockbridge before joining the chamber in 1989. He left the chamber job to join Maxymillian in November 1990.

game. Herrick had ju

Lee wins 49th straight;

Eagle Feb 8. 92

While Samantha Herrick was hitting her Berkshire County scoring milestone, defending county champion Lee clinched at least a tie for the Southern Division title, scoring an 80-26 win at Mount Greylock last night in Berkshire County girls' basketball. The Wildcats, who stretched their winning streak to 49 games, have a three-game lead over Lenox with three league games remaining.

Lee will attempt to nail down the division title on Monday when they play at St. Joseph's.

Elsewhere, Mount Everett defeated Drury 51-35 to run its winning streak to three games, St. Joseph's ended a mini three-game losing streak with a 57-44 win over McCann Tech and Hoosac Valley won the rubber match in its season series with Monument Mountain, 54-29.

Lee 80, Mt. Greylock 26

LEE — Katie Cinella had 16 points and four assists and Alison Forfa added 14 points and seven rebounds as the Wildcats had no trouble improving on their winning streak.

Jen Finnegan also scored 16 points for Lee, which got seven rebounds from Sheila Collins and four steals from Dina Sousa. The Wildcats build a 42-13 halftime lead and were never challenged.

Karen Rice led the Mounties with 10 points.

The Lee jayvees also won, 43-26.

Girls' Basketball

Overall records in parentheses

NORTHERN DIVISION

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Taconic (13-2)	10	1	.909	-
Pittsfield (9-5)	8	3	.727	2
Wahconah (9-6)	6	5	.546	4
Hoosac Valley (5-9)	4	7	.364	6
Monument (5-9)	3	8	.273	7

SOUTHERN DIVISION

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Lee (16-0)	14	0	1.000	-
Lenox (12-4)	11	3	.786	3
Mt. Everett (9-8)	7	7	.500	7
Mt. Greylock (6-10)	5	8	.385	8½
St. Joseph's (4-11)	4	9	.308	9½
Drury (3-13)	2	12	167	12
McCann Tech (2-14)	0	10	.000	12

Thursday's Game

Taconic 64, Pittsfield 49

Yesterday's Games

Wahconah 49, Lenox 45
Mt. Everett 51, Drury 35
Lee 80, Mt. Greylock 26
St. Joseph's 57, McCann 44
Hoosac Valley 54, Monument 29

Lee school board sets public forum on condom policy

Eagle 2/11/92

LEE — Condoms again will be the topic of a public forum the School Committee has scheduled for Feb. 18 at 7 p.m.

The school board, which is considering whether condom machines should be installed in the restrooms at Lee High School, set the meeting to encourage public comments from parents and others with opinions on the matter. It already has proved to be one of the more controversial issues in town.

The School Committee will vote on the proposal at a subsequent meeting March 3, said School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski.

At an initial meeting last month, opinions were sharply divided on the issue, which is making its way into schools around the state and country.

A few school districts in Massachusetts have begun installing condom machines as a means of preventing the spread of the HIV virus, which causes the fatal disease AIDS, among sexually active teen-agers.

The first meeting was held by the schools' Health Advisory Board.

Designer honored in Washington for exhibit catalog

Eagle 2-8-92

By Dorothy W. Chapman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

DALTON — Jonathon J. Nix, an independent graphic designer associated with Studley Press, is one of 57 winners from 20 states and the District of Columbia of the prestigious 1992 Federal Design Achievement Awards.

He was honored for his work during ceremonies conducted by the National Endowment of the Arts at Union Station in Washington, D.C.

The event took place Jan. 28, the same day the Washington Redskins football team received a tumultous welcome after defeating the Buffalo Bills in this year's Super Bowl game.

"It was a simultaneous celebration with the Redskins' victory rally, and I was afraid no one would show up. But I was wrong. There were a lot of people there including many prominent folks, and it was quite an honor," Nix said yesterday.

Nix's work is a catalog documenting a 1988 exhibition at the National Museum of American History's Hall of Printing and Graphic Arts. The exhibit was called "Imperishable Beauty: Pictures Printed in Collotype."

Donated to Smithsonian

Nix said Thomas Reardon, president of Studley Press, has a strong interest in collotype printing, and it was he who commissioned Nix to execute the design, which he donated to the Smithsonian Institution.

The goal of the awards program is to encourage government managers to strive for the best possible design in spending tax dollars.

Presented every four years, the awards honor exemplary federal design achievement in the fields of architecture, graphics, interior design, landscape architecture, product design, urban design, historic preservation and planning.

Collotypes are photographic pictures printed in ink from a gelatin-coated plate. This process yields images with remarkably subtle shadings and richly delicate gray tones.

"Collotype is a printing medium that at one time was the main means for reproducing art. It's a screenless color printing method that has been replaced by four-color offset lithography. The quality of it varies greatly; it could be very, very beautiful, or very bad in some of the old art prints," Nix said yesterday.

Remarks of welcome to the ceremonies were delivered by John E. Frohnmayer, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Attention to detail

According to a description of the work published by the award committee, much of what makes Nix's catalog exemplary can be attributed to the designer's attention to detail. From the selection of the paper stock to the unusual use of endpapers and vellum frontispiece, every element was carefully considered for its impact on the whole. Adding to the reader's appreciation of this unique printing process is a tip-in collotype reproduction of Albrecht Durer's Christ Child with the Globe, mounted opposite the title page.

Produced on a budget of $8,871 in donated funds, the jury said, "It advances the standards of federal design and provides the public with an exquisite and highly informative document that sheds new light on a fascinating artistic process. While this piece is designed on a classical model, it is clearly contemporary in its execution."

Nix, a graphic designer, has been associated with Studley Press for the past seven years. He also owns his own business, called Verso, located at Studley Press on East Housatonic Street. "You could say it's a business within a business, and is an adjunct to Studley's," he said.

In 1988, Studley Press won the printing industry's most prestigious award for a calendar it printed for the Clark Art Institute in Williamstown. That award, sponsored by the Printing Industries of America, was for "Best of Category" in the commercial calendar division. Nix was the designer of that calendar. Sponsors compare the award in the prestige to the Oscar in the movie industry. That competion drew more than 7,600 entries in 52 areas of print communications.

The award is in the form of a statuette of Benjamin Franklin and is known in the trade as a "Benny."

Nix, who lives on Carter Road in Becket, is a member of the Bylaw Study Committee and a former member of the town's Planning Board.

He and his wife, the former Andrea Hoadley, have three children, Olivia, Edward and Arthur.

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Graphic designer Jonathon J. Nix holds catalog for which he won a 1992 Federal Design Achievement Award.

Lee police officers invited to discuss tensions with teens

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Police officers will be invited to discuss the tensions between their department and the town's young people at the next meeting of the task force that has been appointed to examine police-community relations.

"If we have parents who feel this frustrated and kids who feel this frustrated, we must have police who feel frustrated," said task force member Kathleen Bort after last night's session with about 25 parents. "We have to make them feel we will listen to them."

Bort, dean of students at Lee High School, said she was disappointed that policemen did not attend the meeting and suggested they be given the floor at the next meeting, on Feb. 27 at 6:30, to talk about their concerns.

Although police had been invited to the session at the Lee Senior Center, the only one who attended was Officer Joseph Buffis, a member of the task force.

Counterproductive

Task force member Paul E. Perachi welcomed the suggestion but said it would have been awkward and counterproductive for the police to have been present while parents delivered a litany of frustrations with the Police Department, Chief Edward J. Finnegan and what they called an inefficient and often bungled court system.

Many of those same parents had complained to the Selectmen several weeks ago about police conduct, and the board moved to appoint the task force in an effort to improve matters. Complaints involved allegations of rude or unprofessional behavior among some officers and charges of physically abusive behavior toward teen-agers. Parents also said Chief Finnegan is inaccessible to them.

Last night there was more of the same, but there were also a number of people calling for community-based solutions to problems.

Some parents complained about a serious communication problem with the Police Department. They said the police seem to arrest teen-agers precipitously, without first attempting to involve parents in addressing problems. Before parents have the chance to deal with their children, the family is swept into a court system that sets numerous hearings at which paperwork is incomplete and nothing is resolved.

Buffis replied that often young people are given warnings or breaks by the police, but after several infractions arrests are made.

But parents contend that the police should inform them of those warnings and enlist their support early on.

Buffis said that contacting parents is often a practical impossibility, because many of them are not home and many times officers have dealt with many youngsters in the course of a shift.

Carol LePrevost said, however, that communicating with parents is an essential part of the public relations efforts needed in the Police Department. She implored the department to call her if a problem ever arises with her children.

"You rip my heart out if you call and tell me my kid's in jail," she said. "It's got to stop."

Parents whose children had had trouble with the law reported making repeated trips to Southern Berkshire District Court in Great Barrington, only to be told that police reports were not available.

Buffis said police are also frustrated by the same inefficiencies, because prosecutors sometimes do not have the proper paperwork.

Marianne Ashe, another parent, said the police and the community need to create preventive programs to keep teen-agers out of the court system.

A number of suggestions arose, including setting up a "first offense" program in town, whereby community members would handle first offenders in an effort to divert problems from court; setting up a network of concerned parents who would take responsibility, temporarily, for wayward youngsters whose parents cannot be located; and encouraging the police to sponsor activities involving young people in productive ways.

Education was also cited as a potential remedy, parents and task force members agreed. Police need training in how to better communicate with young people, while parents and young people need to know about laws, community expectations and respect for authority.

For example, some parents said they did not know that a 17-year-old is treated as an adult in the court system.

Picking up on the education theme, Bort suggested inviting to the next meeting a consultant she knows, a retired police officer who does training programs in police and community relations.

Although people repeatedly said their complaints revolve around a couple of officers, the task force discouraged them from singling out officers by name.

"If we're going to accomplish anything here, this community has to pull together, and it's important not to alienate any particular segment," said Perachi. "If police feel the task force is on a witch hunt, it will be difficult to cooperate with them. The general sense here is that the police are willing to participate in solving the problem."

For Lee girl

Eagle

Girls' Ba

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee's 50th straight win looked a lot like the other 49 last night in a 78-38 Berkshire County girls' basketball win at St. Joseph's. The Wildcats — who also clinched the Southern Division title with the victory — ran the court, pressed the ball and shot the lights out.

The last time a Lee girls' team walked off the court on the short end of a score was Feb. 12, 1990 at Lenox, where the Millionaires posted a 63-49 victory. Since then it's been 50 straight 'Ws' that also included two of the three straight Division 3 state titles The Wildcats have earned.

The Berkshire County basketball record for consecutive wins is 67 set by the Lenox girls' team from 1981-84.

"Last year it
had a dominan
senior point gu
whose been in
victories. "This
people who we
could keep it g
has been in t
minds, but we'
some pretty goo
Lee coach T
more on his mi
50 straight win
Division title wa
rungs on the se
Wildcats must
Berkshire Count
and state Divisio
"I don't think

Winter Olympic Medal Table
Through Feb. 10

Nation	G	S	B—Tot
Austria	2	2	3— 7
Germany	2	1	1— 4
Norway	1	1	1— 3
Unified Team	1	0	1— 2
Finland	0	1	1— 2
United States	1	0	0— 1
China	0	1	0— 1
France	0	1	0— 1

Yesterday's Medalists

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING
Men
30 Km
GOLD—Vegard Ulvang, Norway
SILVER—Bjorn Daehlie, Norway
BRONZE—Terje Langli, Norway

LUGE
Men
Singles
GOLD—Georg Hackl, Germany
SILVER—Markus Prock, Austria
BRONZE—Markus Schmidt, Ausria

SPEEDSKATING
Women
500
GOLD—Bonnie Blair, Champaign, Ill.
SILVER—Ye Qiaobo, China
BRONZE—Christa Luding, Germany

DEMONSTRATION
Freestyle Skiing
Ballet
Men

Today's Sche

All Times EST
Alpine Skiing
Men's combined slalom, first
Men's combined slalom, se
a.m.
Biathlon
Women's 7.5 km, 8 a.m.
Ice Hockey
Finland vs. Poland, 7 a.m.
United States vs. Germany, 1
Sweden vs. Italy, 2:15 p.m.
Figure Skating
Pairs, freestyle program, 1:30
Luge
Women's single, first and se
a.m.
Nordic Combined
90-meter ski jump, 4:30 a.m.

Canada, 6-1

Canada
Switzerland
First period—1, Canada,
(Joe Juneau), 3:18 (pp). P
Kessler, Swi (cross-checking),
Tosio, Swi (slashing), 6:02; C
(interference), 10:20; Chris L
(elbowing), 12:57; Sean
(roughing), 15:01; Randy
(slashing), 19:52.
Second Period—2, Canada
(Randy Smith, Jason Woolley)
Canada, Eric Lindros (Gordon
Hannan), 5:47. 4, Canada, W
(Eric Lindros, Patrick Lebe
Canada, Joe Juneau (Chr
Randy Smith), 15:43. Penalties

Schmidinger set for

Eagle 2-12-92

■ **OLYMPICS, from A1**

were the three skiers who were to battle it out this week for the final two U.S. spots in Saturday's downhill, according to U.S. women's head coach Paul Major.

With Gerety sidelined, "it's more than likely [Krista] is going to ski" in Saturday's downhill, U.S. Ski Team spokesman Angela Jackson said yesterday.

The U.S. downhill lineup should now feature the 21-year-old Schmidinger, Krone, Edith Thys and Hilary Lindh.

On TV this morning

Berkshire County TV viewers who want to catch Schmidinger's Olympic debut live today will have to get up early, since CBS will broadcast the women's combined downhill this morning between 7 and 9 Highlights of the combined downhill are also scheduled to be aired tonight between 8 and 11.

Schmidinger gained tremendous momentum heading into today's race by finishing third in yesterday's practice run. World Cup downhill leader Katja Seizinger of Germany was first in one minute, 28.84 seconds, with Russia's Svetlana Gladisleva second in 1:29.43 and Schmidinger third in 1:29.53.

"I think it's a great course, especially from the top," Schmidinger said after the practice run. "There are a lot of technical, difficult turns."

Schmidinger's recent efforts, including a 14th in her last World Cup downhill two weeks ago, drew praise from U.S. assistant downhill coach Lex Patten.

"She's been our dark horse all year and I thought we would see her sooner than we did," Patten said. "She had some knee problems earlier, which have been worked out, and now she's running where she thinks she can

Lee High lists 89 students on second-quarter honor roll

Eagle 2/12/92

LEE — Lee High School has announced its honor roll for the second quarter of the 1991-92 school year. The quarter ended Jan. 22 and the total enrollment in the high school on that date was 309.

The criteria for a student to make the high honors list is a grade average of 90 and above with no grade under 80; to be on the honors list a student must have a grade average of 85-90 with no grade under 75.

High honors

Grade 12: Rebecca Allen, Stephanie Castronova, Stephanie Chague, Kathleen Cinella, Sheila Collins, Renee Cory, Shawn Gleason, Amanda Lahey, Ralph Olds and Craig Simmons.

Grade 11: Jonathan Clark, Samuel Fix, Gwen Goehring, Kelsey Scarpa and Karen Scheurer.

Grade 10: James Braim, Lee Brighenti, Sara Burtt, Heidi Clauss, Jenny Cory, Amy DiMario, Chris Eccher, Nathan Jones, Andrea Koenig, Kasey McManmon, Kelly Palmer, Jennifer Pixley, Joshua Shaw, Allison Skowron, Rebecca Stanard and Elisheva Verdi.

Grade 9: Dan Arndt, Sarah Blaisdell, Jonathan Cohen, Brian Eccher, Faith Lorance, Ricky Methe, Sharon Taillefer, Christopher Tisdale, Alyson Truden, Todd Tyer, Mark Walker, Sarah Walsh and Stephanie Wescott.

Honors

Grade 12: Carrie Angers, Aaron Brighenti, Lisa Burrell, Christopher Consolati, Michael Curtin, Christine Fenner, Jennifer Finnegan, Michele Kelly, Michelle Kennedy, Philip Le Prevost, Scott Methe, Travis Roberts, Timothy Shepardson, April Slater, Nadine Souza, Heather Stanard, Joshua Stedman, Heather Wells and Richard Wescott.

Grade 11: Patrick Consolati, Mark Grady, Michael Hall, Elena LaGrant, Jason Loso, William Martin, Felicia Piacentino, Michael Puntin, William Roche, Stacy Rollins, Marcy Taliceo and Richard Wheeler.

Grade 10: Rodney Bragdon, David Cornellier, Dennis Griffin, Melanie North, Jeffrey Puleri, Anthea Taylor and Danica Vaninetti.

Grade 9: Michael Belba, Jason Bush, Christine Cinella, Lori Curtin, Jason Marchant, Cherie Nolan and Kelly O'Brien.

73

Krista's Olympic debut today

Eagle 2/12/92

Associated Press

Krista Schmidinger of Lee streaks down the course at Meribel, France, during yesterday's practice for the downhill.

Posts 3rd best practice time

By Bob McDonough
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Things are definitely looking up for U.S. Olympic skier Krista Schmidinger of Lee — thanks to a combination of good news and bad news.

The good news is that Schmidinger — who was happily stunned by Monday's surprise arrival of her parents at the Olympics — finished third in yesterday's downhill training run at Meribel, France, which gives her momentum heading into today's downhill portion of the women's combined alpine event. The other half of that event is a slalom tomorrow, and the combined results of those two races determines the medals.

'She's been our dark horse all year.'
— Lex Patten, a downhill coach

The "combined" is a separate event, and should not be confused with the regular women's downhill scheduled Saturday, or the women's slalom scheduled Feb. 20.

The bad news is that a pair of women on the U.S. Olympic team have suffered injuries that have knocked them out of the Olympics. But for Schmidinger that means she is practically guaranteed a spot in Saturday's Olympic downhill.

The injuries came during downhill training runs yesterday and Monday. On Monday, U.S. downhill champion Megan Gerety crashed into a Norwegian ski coach, suffering leg injuries that will keep her sidelined three weeks, according to a U.S. team spokesman. Yesterday, U.S. combined champion Wendy Fisher took a spectacular high-speed spill and suffered a broken left thumb plus head, knee and ankle injuries that put her in a hospital.

Gerety, Schmidinger and Kristen Krone

OLYMPICS, continued on C3

Advocate 2/12/92

The long, hard road to the Olympics

By Erik Bruun

Elmar Schmidinger of Lee couldn't keep his mind on his work last week and his superiors Beloit Corp. in Lenox knew it. They called him on to the carpet.

"They said my productivity was off 50 percent and I should get some time off," Schmidinger says. "I thought 'What's happening here? What have I done wrong?'"

His boss and co-workers broke into a broad smile. The company gave Schmidinger and his wife airplane tickets for an all-expenses paid trip to Albertville to watch their daughter, Krista, ski in the Winter Olympics. Fellow workers also chipped in money.

"I feel like I've won Megabucks," says Schmidinger's wife Judy, who left for France Saturday.But neither the Olympic accomplishment nor the Schmidinger's success have come as easily as Beloit's gift to the couple who otherwise would have had to watch their daughter on television from their Laurel Street home.

"We've worked hard for years," Judy says. "People say to me 'Oh what a life (my daughters) have skiing and seeing the world.' But most people don't have a clue about the training, the work, the pressures, the travel they have. There's so much behind what they've done that people don't understand. You have to be very dedicated to be on the U.S. Ski Team. Their lives have not been normal for teen-agers."

~~Continued on page C3~~

Identical twin sisters *Kim and Krista Schmidinger of Lee*

74

Advocate 2/12/92

Coming to grips with kids-cops tension in Lee

Mired in a vicious cycle of disrespect, a special task force in Lee is considering a broad range of initiatives to overcome persistent tension between Lee police and town youths.

Although some parents have assigned blame for the recent problems to a few police officers, other resident and town officials suggest that the issues may be deeply rooted.

Misinformation about the laws and what police do, longstanding disrespect for Lee police officers, a lack of familiarity between police and youths, and allegedly inappropriate behavior by some police, and several other issues have all contributed to the problems, some residents say.

"If we're going to accomplish anything, we're going to have to pull the entire community in on this," says task force member Paul Perachi, a former Lee High School principal who now works as an attorney.

The Lee selectmen appointed the five-person task force last month in the wake of numerous complaints from irate parents about the Lee Police Department. Parents said that some police officers mistreated teens and in some cases were physically abusive.

Despite calls for an outside investigation into the allegations, the Lee selectmen refused to bring in the District Attorney's office, content that Police Chief Edward Finnegan would handle the complaints. Finnegan says the allegations are untrue, but assigned Police Officer Joseph Buffis to the task force to assist in finding ways to bridge relations.

At a public hearing Monday night, parents expressed their dissatisfation with the police. At least one resident said he would ask the state Attorney General's office to investigate the Lee police without going to the selectmen for assistance.

Parents said police have arrested youths for relatively minor first-time offenses and brought them to the Berkshire County House of Correction.

No more phone calls?

"It used to be you'd get a phone call if your kid did something; now you get a summons for court," said Carol LeProvost, a parent and member of the Lee School Committee.

Once a teen is arrested, parents say it takes weeks to learn what exactly their kids have been accused of, and numerous trips to Southern Berkshire District Court in Great Barrington to resolve the problem.

The problems have led to a disrespect for officers and the court system, parents say.

"It all stems from respect," one parent attending the hearing said. "The kids aren't getting any respect, and they're not giving the police any respect."

On the police side of the equation, Buffis told parents that Lee police have to deal with many more problems than parents are aware of. Police are obliged to follow certain procedures, he said, and many times youths have received several warnings before being arrested.

Buffis -- who declined to comment about specific allegations of police behavior -- said it may be possible for police to start informing parents more, but he added that some parents are not responsive to problems when they come up, and that other parents are very difficult to reach.

"I wish that sometime down the road, you would ride with us and see what we do," Buffis told about 25 parents. "You would be very surprised with what you'd find."

He added that Finnegan is trying to improve the situation with police reports, which he said largely stems from problems in communications with the District Attorney's office. Buffis said he and other police officers have similar problems with the court system, which Perachi described as overburdened and understaffed.

To try to get the police officers perspective on the issues, the task force hopes to meet with police at the next committee meeting Feb. 27.

"It's important for the police to be very involved in the next few months," Buffis said. "But it's not all going to come from the Police Department. We're going to need some help from the community."

During the course of the 2 1/2-hour discussion, the task force and residents came up with a long laundry list of ways to overcome the problem. They included the following:

-- Kathleen Bort, dean of students at Lee High School, suggested the town reconsider implementing a first-offenders program. Written in 1982-83 by the School Department, Bort said the program called for a community approach for first-time transgressions of the law. Punishments would include community service. The program was rejected by courts for diverting judicial authority away from the state judicial system, Bort said.

-- Develop programs to promote familiarity between Lee youths and police. Suggestions ranged from basketball games to programs in the school system.

-- Education programs for youths and parents on what the laws are, the role of the police, what parents should look out for in their teen-age children, and other issues.

-- Developing a place for local teens to hangout, besides Main Street where they tend to congregate in large groups.

-- Encouraging parents and adults to be more respectful about police. Bort said that many youths have been given long personal histories of Lee police officers from other adults. The result, she said is many kids are not respectful of the police because of their parents' statements.

-- Working with police to encourage them to act in more appropriate ways with Lee youths who are being disruptive or verbally abusive. "Unfortunately, the young people are not the ideal," one paren said. "Professionally, I expect the police t be more mature, though."

Advocate 2/12/92

Lee Selectmen reject town rep. petition

Lee Selectmen Martin Deely and Diane P. Roosa rejected Monday night a request from former Selectmen Joseph Castronova and William D. Bean to ask voters to drop the town representative form of government in Lee.

Backed with a petition signed by over 100 residents, Castronova and Bean have asked for a non-binding referendum question at the annual town meeting. The two men say the 20-year-old town representative form of government has not worked and Lee should return to an open town meeting format that most other towns use.

Although Selectmen's Chairman Joseph F. Dupont voted to place the question on the ballot, Roosa and Deely refused to do so. Both say the present system of town government, although imperfect, works.

Hoping to resolve the problem of a lack of participation by town representatives at town meetings, Town Clerk-Treasurer Patricia Carlino has scheduled a meeting with town reps tonight (Wednesday) to try to restore participation.

Eagle 2/12/92

Lee school hours to shift for consolidated bus routes

LEE — School bus routes will be consolidated next year as a money-saving maneuver. As a result, school hours will shift slightly to accommodate fewer buses.

The School Committee voted last week to adopt a recommendation by School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski, who proposed eliminating one of three bus routes to save money during the next fiscal year. The remaining two routes will accommodate all bus-riding students.

Students in kindergarten through Grade 4 will start school at the same time next year, but 5th and 6th graders will start 20 minutes later, bringing their hours in line with the younger students. All will start school at 8:50 and end at 3:10.

Seventh and 8th graders will start school about 10 minutes earlier, at 7:57, and end at 2:27.

Lee High School students' hours will be unaffected, beginning at 8 and ending at 2:15.

The School Department must negotiate a new contract this year with the private company that provides bus service to the schools, and Zukowski said consolidating bus routes will save between $10,000 and $30,000. The busing budget for this year is around $180,000.

TRUCK, continued on

Advocate 2/12/92

Lee ponders municipal pickup

Lee residents will be asked this spring whether the town should start a municipal trash pickup service for all households.

Lee Department of Public Works Superintendent Peter Scolforo says the DPW board would like to have a non-binding referendum question on the annual election ballot to see if the town should pursue the issue.

"The way it is now, every household pays a private hauler between $140 and $264 a year to have their trash picked up depending on how much they have. We think that if the town does it, we can do it for between $120 and $140 a year," Scolforo says. "Before we do anything with it, though, we want to see if the townspeople are interested."

Pittsfield and Richmond are the only Berkshire communities that have a municipal pickup. Trash removal in Lee has become an issue in the last several months because of the town's decision to close the landfill to residential use in favor of the Vicon Resource Recovery plant in Pittsfield.

With a municipal pickup service, the town would hire a hauler on contract to be responsible for picking up all residential trash in town, Scolforo says.

"There's an economies of scale that kicks in," Scolforo says. Selectmen Chairman Joseph DuPont, however, says he does not believe the town should get into the trash business.

"I don't really see the need for it," DuPont says. "I'd just assume let the marketplace determine the way it's done. If you don't like the way one hauler does it, you go with another. Plus, I don't want to risk the possibility of putting any local people out of business. If the DPW board wants to do it, we'll put it on the ballot."

Scolforo says the change would add $400,000 to the town's budget and would require the town to raise the tax levy limit imposed by Proposition 2 1/2.

Schmidinger captures 2nd in Olympic race

■ SECOND, from A1

in her day of glory. She was cheered by her parents, who videotaped the race.

"I was pretty psyched when I saw my time," she said, waving to her camera-toting father, Elmar. "Obviously I dreamt of doing well, but it's different when it's for real."

On a springlike day with temperatures in the upper 40s, Kronberger ignored soft snow to post the fastest time of 1 minute, 25.84 seconds for the 1⅓-mile course.

'It's good for me'

Kronberger, who won the slalom title last season, has been the best women's overall skier in the world for the last two years. A string of poor performances last month had eroded her confidence, but she was her old dominant self yesterday.

Schmidinger was second in 1:26.36 and was followed by slalom neophytes Katja Seizinger of Germany, Kerrin Lee-Gartner of Canada and Svetlana Gladishiva of the Unified Team.

Bournissen was seventh-fastest in the combined downhill in 1:26.92 and is better in slalom than all those above her except Kronberger.

Wachter, who turned 25 yesterday, was 11th best in the combined downhill and is a veteran slalomer.

Austria's Sabine Ginther, the favorite in the combined event, crashed on a practice run Tuesday and suffered a back injury that knocked her out of the Olympics and the rest of the skiing season.

The same jump on which Ginther and American skier Wendy Fisher were injured in training accidents claimed a couple of more victims yesterday. Skiers fly into the air off the jump, and several have crash-landed.

Warwara Zelenskaja of the Unified Team and American Kristin Krone crashed there during the combined downhill. Krone tumbled into a crash barrier and broke her left hand.

"I just have to walk away from the hill and put this behind me. I've fallen before, it just happens," Krone said. "It's the most attention I've had in a long time."

Schmidinger flew dramatically off the bump and enjoyed the ride, saying: "It's just really fun hanging out up there."

"It showed a lot of guts to take the risks and be in there," assistant coach Lex Patten said in a release by the U.S. Ski Team. "[But when she almost fell,] it made my heart bleep."

Ignored by the 1992 guide book of the world's top skiers, Schmidinger questioned last summer whether she would even be in Meribel.

"I'd love to be in the Olympics, but I don't want to be there unless I'm competitive," she said before the season.

She was more than competitive yesterday.

Asthma is Topic Of Public Discussion

Berk Rec Feb 13 92

LEE — "Asthma: What Is It?" will be the topic of a Feb. 19 program at St. Mary's School on Orchard Street.

Dr. Dennis Tresp will discuss the chronic disease at the meeting, to be held from 7 to 9 p.m. The free program is for people of all ages who have asthma.

More information is available from the Visiting Nurse Association in Lee.

Eagle 2/13/92

Day of glory

Associated Press

Krista Schmidinger of Lee flies high during her spectacular run in yesterday's downhill in Meribel, France.

Schmidinger 2nd

By Rob Gloster
Associated Press

MERIBEL, France — Krista Schmidinger skied the race of her life, a breathtaking 70-mph blitz of the Olympic downhill course. She will need an ever better effort to come away with a medal from the first women's skiing event of the Winter Games.

Schmidinger, 21, the pride of Lee, Mass., mastered notorious bumps and dips, brushed a safety fence and drew gasps from the crowd on her way to the second-fastest time in the downhill portion of the women's combined yesterday.

Her best event is downhill. The combined ends today with a slalom, and the overall fastest time wins.

That's why Schmidinger spent little time savoring her run, which put her behind only World Cup overall champion Petra Kronberger. Instead, she went out to practice her slalom technique.

"I haven't run much slalom this year," said Schmidinger, whose best World Cup downhill result this year has been a 14th. "I'll be putting on my slalom gear and banging some gates."

Kronberger is an excellent slalomer. Other skiers well-placed for medals are Switzerland's Chantal Bournissen, world champion in combined, and 1988 Olympic combined winner Anita Wachter of Austria.

Though she may struggle in today's combined slalom, Schmidinger reveled

SECOND, continued on A6

The talk of the town

Eagle 2/13/92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Krista Schmidinger
At Jacob's Pillow

LEE — When Elmar Schmidinger was called into his boss' office at the Beloit-Lenox plant a week ago a group of executives were displaying the grim faces that signal layoffs. His production was down, they said, and they didn't expect to get much out of him next week.

Then, smiles breaking out, they gave him the news: Beloit had arranged and paid for Schmidinger, a machinist there for 20 years, and his wife, Judith, to travel to Meribel, France, where their 21-year-old daughter is competing in the Winter Olympics. Beloit's employees chipped in some spending money as well.

Krista Schmidinger, the Olympic skier, was elated when her parents showed up Monday.

And to the immense pride of her parents and her hometown, she finished second in yesterday's combined downhill, part of the combined event that finishes with today's slalom.

Yesterday's performance, the best ever by a Berkshire County Olympic athlete, puts her in a strong position for Saturday's big event — the downhill.

KRISTA, continued on A6

Lee Bank Promotes Three

Berk Rec Feb 13-92

LEE — Lee Bank has promoted Kathy Naventi-Brown, Wayne W. Lemanski and Thomas N. Kirk.

Ms. Naventi-Brown has been named senior vice president, deposit services. She has been with the bank since 1973, most recently as vice president.

A Lee resident, she is treasurer of the Lee Youth Association and a member of the Lee Kiwanis Club.

Mr. Lemanski is now senior vice president and senior loan officer. He was with the bank's lending department. He resides in Lenox.

Mr. Kirk is assistant vice president of operations. He had been operations manager. He resides in Dalton.

Lee and Tyringham schools remain united without Otis

2/14/92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The town of Otis is now free to form a regional school district with Sandisfield, following a meeting this week at which representatives from the three-town school union voted unanimously to dissolve the 91-year-old triad.

After the vote by the nine-member School Union Committee, the Tuesday evening meeting adjourned so that the school committees from Lee and Tyringham could hold separate meetings to vote on re-forming the school union that had just been dissolved.

The result is now a two-town school union.

The meetings bring an end to months of controversy that erupted over Otis' efforts to leave the school union to form a regional school district with Sandisfield.

Officials in Lee and Tyringham had resisted Otis' initiative largely for financial reasons. Otis' share of the central office's administrative costs will now have to be borne by Lee and Tyringham.

After the two school committees met separately, they reconvened the school union meeting to discuss how the central office's administrative costs will be divided between the towns.

During this fiscal year, the overall central office budget, including the superintendent's costs, is approximately $105,000.

School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said the school union costs will shift heavily onto Lee during the fiscal 1993 school year, increasing the town's overall school budget by around $23,000.

The increase will make it harder to keep the school budget in line with the 2.5 percent cap being mandated by town officials, he said.

During the current fiscal year, Lee bore 61 percent of the administrative costs, while Otis paid 29 percent and Tyringham contributed 10 percent.

Now, with Otis out of the picture, Lee will assume 90 percent of the costs, while Tyringham pays 10 percent. Lee's share will gradually increase until the 1995 fiscal year, when the town will pay 92 percent and Tyringham will pay 8 percent.

Tyringham's cost are based on the number of pupils from that town, Zukowski said.

The proposed school budget for fiscal year 1993 was originally 4.6 percent above the current year's budget of $4.6 million. The School Committee has thus far trimmed that budget to a 3.8 percent increase above this year's, but the added costs of the school union will push the budget up again to a 4.3 percent boost.

"We will have to make reductions in that amount," said Zukowski. "We'll have to cut the budget by 1.8 percent, a cut of about $69,000."

2-14-92 Eagle

Lee seeking traffic light at busiest intersection

LEE — The state Department of Public Works will send a representative to the Selectmen's meeting Tuesday at 7:30 to discuss a proposal to install a traffic light at the intersection of Park, West Park and Main streets.

According to a letter from the DPW, the request for the traffic signal was initiated by the town. The letter from Ross B. Dindio, district highway engineer, describes the proposed signal as a "safety improvement project" that may be eligible for federal funding.

"We are requesting public input concerning study alternatives and impacts of any nature which may affect the immediate site and surrounding area," wrote Dindio.

The intersection at the south end of Main Street is regarded as the busiest in town, particularly during the summer months. The request for a traffic light there was initiated some time ago, when William Bean was on the Board of Selectmen.

According to DPW documentation, the project would involve removing three traffic islands in the intersection and installing new pavement markings and a traffic signal.

Lee savors Krista Schmidinger

■ KRISTA, from A1

Krista, who has skied alongside her twin sister, Kim, was the talk of the town yesterday.

The twins' skiing careers have reached peak after peak over the last 12 years of formal training, culminating in Krista's selection to the U.S. Olympic team early this month.

Heidi Voelker of Pittsfield, who competed in the 1988 Winter Games in Calgary, was also named to the team and will compete in the slalom at Meribel on Feb. 20.

Yesterday patrons who sidled up to the counter at Joe's Diner were all chatting about Krista Schmidinger.

"Judy was just in here last week," said proprietor Joe Sorrentino from behind the counter. "I asked her if she was going [to Meribel] but she said no, they couldn't afford the trip."

Town Clerk Patricia Carlino went to Diesel Dan's truck stop to send a "good luck" telegram from the town. It read:

"Krista: Congratulations, best of luck. Whole town watching and praying. Love from all, Town of Lee, Mass., home of a 1992 Olympian."

Kim sidelined by injury

Carlino said the town has been fielding phone calls from reporters and television stations trying to track down Krista's sister Kim. Kim's efforts to qualify for the Olympic team were derailed by a knee injury, and she is reportedly training in Vermont. She could not be reached yesterday.

School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said the schools had flowers sent to the family in France.

Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. Dupont said he is making "welcome home" signs that will be erected along the roads into town.

Krista and Kim got their start at skiing at around age 2 with the guidance of their father. A native of Austria, Schmidinger is a skier and former racing coach at Bousquet Ski Area in Pittsfield. Friends said that although he provided the initial impetus, the twins took off on their own quickly.

Timothy O'Neill of Lee, a longtime friend and work colleague of Schmidinger's, said their father has been "coaching, training and pushing" the girls since they were old enough to ski. Both parents, he said, have been "super supportive" of the twins' aspirations.

Krista and Kim attended school in Lee until transferring during their sophomore year to Stratton Mountain School in Vermont, a private school for aspiring skiers. Both young women spent much of their teens traveling to skiing competitions around the world, and both are members of the U.S. Ski Team.

Eagle Fe

Town Clerk Patrici
Diesel Dan's to sen
'Krista: Congratul
Whole town watch

Intensely competitive

Lee High School Principal Richard T. Salinetti said the Schmidinger twins were superb athletes, playing soccer, swimming and biking to keep in shape for skiing.

Gregg Needell, a ski coach at Stratton Mountain School, said he certainly expected Krista to finish out the week among the top 10 women skiers but was surprised that she came in second in yesterday's competition. He said it appears her skills as a technical skier are well-suited to the course at Meribel.

He described Krista as intensely competitive.

"It takes years and years and

2-14-92 Eagle

Associated Press

Krista finishes 11th

Krista Schmidinger of Lee is shown dodging the snowflakes during yesterday's first run of the combined slalom at the Winter Olympics. She finished 14th yesterday, leaving her 11th in the combined event.

Eagle 2/14/92

Krista Schmidinger

Krista misses, but still upbeat

By Mike Clark
Associated Press

MERIBEL, France — Second in the downhill and 14th in slalom. It didn't take long for Krista Schmidinger to figure out which she enjoyed more.

The second place in Wednesday's downhill portion of the combined event was the best finish ever for the 21-year-old Lee, Mass., native. Her slalom finish yesterday reinforced the fact that going fast is her forte.

"I'm just going to have a blast in the downhill," she said of the premier women's alpine event scheduled for tomorrow. "I'm just glad this race is over with."

Petra Kronberger won the women's combined with two flawless slalom runs. **Page C1.**

Schmidinger finished 11th overall after a pair of respectable slalom runs.

Her downhill Wednesday was a rush — she flew off jumps, bashed into a course gate and narrowly missed the safety netting on one sweeping turn.

She was beaten only by Petra Kronberger of Austria, the best woman skier in the world.

Among those Schmidinger left behind was last year's downhill champion, Chantal Bournissen of Switzerland, and this year's leader in the standings, Germany's Katja Seizinger.

Compared to her downhill stunts, dancing through slalom gates would seem tame stuff. Yet Schmidinger admitted to a case of nerves.

"It was kind of stressful, but it was fun — just all the emotions of being at the start and taking it as a challenge and trying to keep the other things out."

She seldom skis slalom and had only Wednesday afternoon to prepare for yesterday's gallop through the gates. She augmented her brief workout with a phone call home to her twin sister, Kim,

KRISTA, continued on A6

14A

Schmidinger upbeat about tomorrow

Eagle 2/14/92

■ **KRISTA, from A1**

who is nursing an injury.

"She was psyched," Schmidinger said. "She's more of a technical skier. She told me to use my ankles and knees and keep my hands up."

Following Kim's advice, Krista was 23rd after the morning run. In the afternoon, she did better because she did what she knows best.

"On the second run, I was just much more aggressive," she said. "I was trying not to think about the pressure and stuff. I didn't want to put pressure on myself. I just skied my race."

By the time the women made their second slalom run, snow had been falling heavily for about four hours. Gatekeepers fought a losing battle trying to keep the race course clear.

"It was a rodeo ride," Schmidinger said. "It was kind of like going through some whipped cream and checking it out. It was pretty neat."

Lee Selectman DuPont chides colleagues on agreeing to pay hikes, other issues

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. DuPont had a lousy week at the helm of town government.

Most frustrating, he said, was when his colleagues on the board voted Monday night to sign a contract with the town's highway employees, giving them a 3 percent wage hike even though DuPont protested that the town can't afford it.

What's more, now that the highway workers got their raise, other town employees who are in contract negotiations will expect the same, said DuPont.

"How in the world can town employees ask for a raise, and how in the world can we give it to them when we know we don't have the money to pay?" he lamented yesterday.

'How in the world can town employees ask for a raise, and how in the world can we give it to them, when we know we don't have the money to pay?'
— Joseph F. DuPont

Sure sign of other hikes?

Signing a contract with the town's teachers, and now the highway workers, is a sure but reckless sign that everyone will get the same raise, DuPont said. The Lee Police Association and the Lee Employees Assocation are still negotiating.

Then, Selectmen Martin H. Deely and Diane Roosa refused to support DuPont's effort to place a question on the town meeting warrant regarding whether the town should abandon party politics and establish a non-partisan caucus.

At last year's town meeting, the same question was raised but it was tabled on a motion by the chairman of the Democratic Town Committee. However, the question was also on the election ballot last spring, and voters supported the measure.

"It was very undemocratic the way it happened last year," DuPont said. "After the voters passed the question I thought we had an obligation to go back to the town meeting this year and try to implement it."

DuPont grumbled that the reason his motion wasn't seconded by Deely or Roosa was "party politics." They are both Democrats, and he is an independent.

Questions referendum

DuPont was further annoyed that Deely and Roosa voted against placing a non-binding referendum question on the election ballot asking if the town should abandon the representative form of government.

Town resident Joseph Castronova and former Selectman William Bean have been collecting signatures to get that question on the ballot. They claim the town representative form of government, in place since the 1970s, deprives the general public of fully participating in town meetings and they want to "open up" the process. They've been collecting signatures on a petition in an effort to convince the Selectmen to put it on the ballot.

DuPont said the Selectmen should place the question on the ballot because it was a petition initiative.

Now, without the Selectmen's support, Castronova and Bean will have to come up with the signatures of 10 percent of the town's registered voters, or about 300 names, in order to get the question on the ballot.

Town meeting query

The question will be on the annual town meeting agenda, but proponents of the measure say town representatives won't vote themselves out of office. Placing the question on the ballot will be a measure of what the general population wants, said Castronova.

"I don't agree that we should throw out the system, but the fact that so many voters signed the petition, we have an obligation to them," DuPont said.

Deely replied, however, that such a dramatic change in town government requires more intensive study, perhaps by a committee that would hold some public meetings on the subject.

He gave a similar reason for objecting to the referendum question regarding the non-partisan town caucus.

"I voted about it frankly because there's been no real discussion about it," he said.

He said he suggested forming a committee to study the matter, but that DuPont wasn't interested.

Deely remarked that this will be a year of big change for town government, because the town is hiring a full-time administrator. Adding an administrator and also changing the representative form of government shouldn't be done at the same time, he said.

Layoff risks

On the subject of raises for town employees, Deely said the highway personnel accepted a 3 percent raise knowing it carries the inherent risks of layoffs unless money can be found to pay the increases.

"We voted it with two complete provisos: That if we can't balance the budget we'll have another one of those seances where we start budget cutting and we may have to look directly at their jobs, and we have to look at the cost of health insurance, because it's become absolutely out of control," Deely said.

On the other hand, said Deely, town employees deserve raises if at all possible.

"You have to respect your personnel," he said.

DuPont, however, said "With so many people out of work, and the town budget so out of whack, we shouldn't be giving anyone a raise."

Eagle 2-15-92

Lee girls, Herrick add to big totals

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee ran its winning streak to 52 games and Samantha Herrick of Lenox pushed her all-time Berkshire County scoring record to 1,867 points last night as league action in Berkshire County girls' basketball began to draw to a close. The final two games of the league schedule will be Tuesday when St. Joseph's plays at Wahconah and Taconic hosts Lenox.

The Berkshire County championship game between Lee at Taconic will be played Thursday night at Taconic at 7:30. The seedings meeting for the Western Mass. tournament is scheduled for Feb. 22. Locally, Mount Greylock, McCann Tech and Monument Mountain have chosen not to participate in the open tournament.

Last night, Lee defeated Mount Everett 79-34 while Herrick's 33-point effort helped Lenox post a 68-45 win at St. Joseph's. Elsewhere, Greylock surprised Hoosac Valley 58-55 in overtime, Drury topped McCann 45-23 and Pittsfield upended Monument 57-42.

Girls' Basketball

Overall records in parentheses

NORTHERN DIVISION

	W	L	Pct.	GB
*Taconic (15-2)	12	1	.923	-
Pittsfield (11-6)	10	4	.714	2½
Wahconah (10-7)	7	6	.538	5
Hoosac Valley (7-10)	6	8	.461	6½
Monument (6-11)	4	10	.429	8½

SOUTHERN DIVISION

	W	L	Pct.	GB
*Lee (19-0)	17	0	1.000	-
Lenox (14-4)	13	3	.813	3½
Mt. Everett (10-10)	8	9	.491	9
Mt. Greylock (7-12)	6	11	.353	11
St. Joseph's (4-14)	4	12	.250	12½
Drury (4-15)	3	14	.176	14
McCann Tech (2-16)	0	12	.000	14½

Yesterday's Game
Drury 45, McCann Tech 23
Lenox 68, St. Joseph's 45
Lee 79, Mt. Everett 34
Mt. Greylock 58, Hoosac 55 (OT)
Pittsfield 57, Monument 42
*Clinched division

Greylock 58, Hoosac 55 (OT)

CHESHIRE — The Mounties ended their season on an upbeat note, getting a season-high 17 points from forward Melissa Meczywor in the upset against the Hurricanes.

With Hoosac leading 51-44 with 1:30 left in regulation, the Mounties rallied to tie the game 53-53, which forced the overtime. In the extra session, Meczywor and Karen Rice opened with baskets before the Hurricanes' Suzi Robinson (game-high 18 points) answered with a bucket.

Greylock added one point from the foul line near the end of the overtime, and the Hurricanes were never able to get off the three-point attempt needed to tie the game.

"We had trouble taking care of the ball at the end," said Hoosac coach Bob Mularczyk, whose team led 27-26 at halftime. "But I tip my hat to the Greylock team."

Rice had 12 points for the Mounties while Christine Marks chipped in 10 points. Carly Charbonneau had a season-high 11 points for Hoosac.

Lee 79, Everett 34

LEE — By now, girls' basketball opponents know the Lee hoop mantra, "pressure defense and balanced scoring." Last night, the Wildcats gave a perfect demonstration.

Leading 12-10 early in the first half, Lee's full-court pressure caused a 30-4 run that helped generate a 34-19 halftime lead. Allison Forfa had all 11 of her points in the first half, while Kate Cinella scored 10 of her 14 points in the opening stanza.

"We're peaking right now, and we're really healthy," warned Wildcats mentor Tom Cinella.

Jen Finnegan had 15 points to lead the Wildcats, while Sarah Blaisdell made it four in double figures with 10 points. Cinella had five assists, giving her 103 for the season. Amanda Rossi had 14 points to lead the Eagles.

Lenox 68, St. Joe's 45

PITTSFIELD — Early on, the Crusaders doubled defensively on Herrick, but Sherry Zabian hit a pair of threes and Terry LeComte also hit from the outside. That forced Crusaders' coach Brian Whitman to resort to a man-to-man defense, which Herrick promptly digested.

"We just couldn't control her," said Whitman, of Herrick, who scored 16 of her game-high 33 points in the first half.

The Millionaires used an 8-0 run midway through the first half to take a 34-19 halftime lead.

Zabian added 11 points for the Millionaires, while Lisa DeVergilio scored 15 for St. Joe's.

Pittsfield 57, Monument 42

GREAT BARRINGTON — Monument came back from a 29-22 deficit to tie the game 36-36. But three-point specialist Becca Williams drained a trey and the Generals scored the next two baskets to take a 43-36 lead.

"We got it back down to three points, but Pittsfield pulled away after that," Monument coach Andy Troiano said.

Much of the game was played at the foul line, where the Generals excelled. Pittsfield converted 20 of 23 attempts while Monument could muster just a 12 for 26 effort. The Generals were able to expand their lead after Monument senior forward Holly Clark fouled out about midway through the second half.

Jen Maloney and Stephanie Ladley were Pittsfield's one-two punch with 18 and 12 points respectively. Lauren Pellegrino tossed in 17 points to pace the Spartans.

Drury 45, McCann 23

NORTH ADAMS — The Blue Devil guards did most of the damage against McCann. Tammy Caruso scored a game-high 13 points including a pair of three-point shots while Heather Zoltek had one trey in an 11-point effort.

The Hornets, who trailed 29-7 at halftime and did not win a league game, were a squad that worked hard all year, according to coach Kevin Morandi.

"We've got four seniors leaving and we're going to miss them," Morandi said. "But we were able to get some time for our underclassmen and I was very pleased with what we accomplished."

Junior Alicia Paquin led McCann with eight points.

79

Lending a hand in Lee

Eagle 2/18/92

Four-church effort assures privacy, cuts red tape

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — For struggling residents who are out of work, money and food but are too proud to admit their plight, help is available.

The Community Emergency Needs Resource Center, a four-church effort based at St. George's Episcopal Church on Franklin Street, quietly opened its doors in October to provide food and clothing, confidentially, to people who need assistance, organizers said yesterday.

Now that its shelves are well-stocked with donations and its distribution system is in place, the center's organizers are stepping up publicity efforts, to encourage people to accept some help.

"The biggest obstacle in Lee is getting people to overcome their embarrassment and pride," said Christine Corbiere, a member of St. George's parish and an organizer of the food pantry.

Volunteer Joseph Marino, who was laid off a year ago from his job at GE, knows the frustrations Corbiere is speaking about.

Joblessness 'humiliating'

"It's a very humiliating experience to be out of a job," he said. "I'm 57, and I can't get anyone to even talk to me."

He said he has weathered five recessions, and this is the worst yet.

A member of the Church of the Good Shepherd in South Lee, Marino decided to volunteer at the resource center because he had time on his hands and he sees the need for volunteer help rising as state services are cut.

In addition to St. George's and the Church of the Good Shepherd, the First Congregational Church and St. Mary's Church are participating.

JoAnn Lancaster and Douglass Ford said the center has encountered a lot of previously self-sufficient working people who have been laid off for the first time in their lives.

"Part of their identity is taken away," said Lancaster.

Berkshire County's unemployment rate rose to 9 percent in December, the most recent month

LEE, continued on A12

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Volunteers JoAnn Lancaster, left, and Marian Greenleaf at the food operation at St. George's Church.

Lending a hand in Lee

Eagle 2-18-93

■ LEE, from A1

for which figures are available.

So far, said Corbiere, the resource center has provided assistance to 18 families, some of whom have come back two and three times. Among them are a number of young families with babies, so there is a constant need for donations of baby formula and baby food, she said.

The food pantry has received cash donations from numerous businesses in town, said Corbiere, and most have donated a minimum of $100. Price Chopper has set up food carts at checkout stations where shoppers can drop off food items they buy. Lee Bank employees donated food at Christmastime, and the other churches in town all contribute.

The center has evolved into an ecumenical service with the motto "Neighbors helping neighbors."

"We've been surprised by the amount of support we've gotten," said Corbiere. "The townspeople are so generous."

To encourage people in need to come forward, the resource center promises confidentiality and minimizes red tape, she said. Interviewers take down only some basic information from people who need help and then give them a number so that when they return they need only give an identification number.

Corbiere said people who know of a neighbor in need may come in, provide the information and pick up a box of food to deliver.

"We don't feel called on to be judgmental about the level of need," said Ford. "If they walk through the door, that's OK with me. At some point you have to let trust take over."

The resource center also provides clothing items, such as winter coats, gloves, mittens and hats.

The resource center is open from 10 to noon on Saturdays, and emergency assistance is available during the week to people who call the church. Many people seem more comfortable calling during the week than showing up Saturday, said Corbiere.

The volunteers said the schools have been particularly supportive of the volunteer effort, because schoolchildren often provide evidence of financial problems at home.

Diane Cinella, nurse at Lee Central School, where about 550 pupils are enrolled, said she sent fliers about the food pantry home with all the children.

What she sees often are children who need warm clothing or new shoes.

"They tell you things like the parents can't go somewhere because the car needs to be fixed, and they had to fix the car instead of buying food," said Cinella. "You can just tell when children are in need."

Sometimes a teacher will go to St. George's and pick up a winter coat for a child who needs one, she said.

Marino said the good that comes out of such hard times is a neighborly, community spirit that is lost when times are good.

The resource center embodies just that spirit, he said.

Union calls severance offer pitiful

Eagle 2-18-92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The union representing workers at Westfield River Paper Co.'s Mountain Mill has refused to accept the severance conditions offered to 42 hourly employees who will be laid off Feb. 28.

Andrew L. Bassett, president of United Paper Workers Local 1499, said he was "disgusted" with the offer from the company, which would provide one week of severance pay to workers with up to three years' service and two weeks' pay for workers with more than three years of service.

"We've got a couple of guys there with 30 years of service, and they're getting two weeks' pay," said Bassett yesterday.

Westfield River announced two weeks ago that its East Lee mill will be shut down Feb. 28 and its operations consolidated with the main plant in Russell. The company cited a declining market for the paper products made at the Forrest Street mill and indicated that consolidation will increase manufacturing

UNION, continued on B4

Offer rejected

■ UNION, from B1

capability and profitability.

The company employs a total of 48 people at Mountain Mill.

Bassett said the union refused to sign the severance offer and has turned the matter over to lawyers and the union representative. The union contends that the company failed to give 60 days' notice of the plant closing, for which it could be found liable.

The union is scheduled to meet tomorrow with company officials, he said.

"What they offered ... is just sad," he said.

Eagle 2-18-92

Lee police, task force to meet in closed session

Eagle 2-18-92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Lee's police officers have agreed to meet with the police-community relations task force in a closed-door session Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the Senior Center.

Police Officer Joseph Buffis, who is the Lee Police Department's representative on the committee, said yesterday an executive session meeting is appropriate "because we may be talking about personalities in the department."

He said the officers believe a closed-door session will enable them to speak freely about the issues within the department and the community. Names will be mentioned, he said, and personalities will likely be part of the discussion.

Buffis said the executive session portion of the meeting will be held first, and the meeting will then be opened to the public.

The Selectmen appointed the five-member task force in response to complaints from the public about what appears to be a cycle of hostility and disrespect between the police and young people in town.

Complaints have been leveled at the department, ranging from the alleged inaccessibility of Chief Edward J. Finnegan, poor communication between police and parents, and allegations that some teens have been "roughed up" by police.

At the committee's last meeting, members said that having heard the community's complaints they wanted to balance their information with input from the police officers.

Buffis, who said Finnegan will be on vacation next week, was asked by Finnegan to relay his concerns to the committee at the meeting.

Buffis said he has spoken to his colleagues in the Police Department regarding the invitation to attend the meeting.

"The guys are willing to come forward and speak as long as it can be done out of the public's earshot," he said.

Officer Jack Winters, president of the Lee Police Association, declined to comment on the situation yesterday, and Finnegan also refused to discuss the matter.

Committee member Paul E. Perachi said he has no objection to an executive session as long as the open meeting law is adhered to. Another member, Charles O'Neil, agreed.

"I guess I have no objections if they have no other way of getting this done," said O'Neil.

"My position is that it's important for us to meet with the police and get their input," said Perachi. "We've certainly gotten the town's input, and I don't want the police to be on the defensive."

Lee fine tunes government

Acknowledging that town representative government in Lee needs work, Town Clerk Patricia Carlino held a refresher course last week for Lee town representatives.

"A lot of representatives haven't understood what they were supposed to do, because nobody has ever told them," Carlino says. "A lot of people were surprised by what they learned. Most people don't know that there's an appeal process where the voters can overturn a decision by the representatives."

Although town representatives initially were quite active in town government when the new form of government was created more than 20 years ago, participation has dropped.

District meetings between representatives and voters are no longer held, many representatives do not attend meetings and several confess that they don't understand all the procedures during a town meeting.

While a petition is being distributed to try to abolish the representatives in favor of a town meeting form of government, Carlino and some other town officials say they would prefer to rejuvenate the existing system rather than overhaul it.

Some of the information that has become obscure in town representive government follows:

-- The town has six districts with nine people serving as representatives for each district. In addition, there are seven at-large representatives -- the selectmen, town clerk, moderator, Finance Committee chairman and state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee.

-- Each representative votes for the people in his or her district. If a person would like his or her views expressed at a town meeting, those views should be given to the town representative. A list of town representatives is available at Town Hall or in the annual town report.

-- Town representatives are elected every three years, and three positions up are for election in each district each year. To run for the position, one must get nomination papers at Town Hall and have 10 registered voters sign them.

-- Any decision by the town representatives at a town meeting can be appealed to the voters at large. The 1968 enabling act calls for an appeal process in which a special town meeting for the voters can be held if a petition signed by at least 5 percent of the voters -- with at least 30 people signing it in each district -- is presented to the selectmen within 10 days of the vote. The selectmen must then call for a special town meeting within 14 days.

Adv rate 2/19/92

Critics say the rights of Lee voters are being denied

Amidst accusations that voters' rights are being denied, the Lee Selectmen refused by a 2-1 vote last week to place an article on the town warrant asking to abolish the town's party system.

Selectmen's Chairman Joseph F. Dupont requested that town representatives consider the issue after Lee residents voted last year to create a non-partisan system in Lee government. The vote was taken as a non-binding question.

"The people of Lee voted last year to get rid of the party system," Dupont says. "I think it should at least be presented to the town representatives to consider."

A similar article last year was passed over at town meeting in a divided vote. But Dupont says the election vote indicates that many people favor the idea and it should be presented to the town representatives again.

"I can't see that 61 people (the town representatives) will turn their backs on the townspeople," says former Lee Selectman William D. Bean who supports the measure.

But Selectman Martin Deely says that before the issue is brought before town representatives, a committee should study the issue. Deely and Selectman Diane P. Roosa voted against placing the issue before town representatives.

"You should not change a long-term tradition in government by simply putting the issue on the ballot," Deely says. "We should have one of those nice summer sessions here where everybody stands up and shakes their fists in a good Lee tradition."

Deely says he would not oppose letting town representatives act on the issue if a committee studied the proposal.

Deely, however, says he does not want to see Lee lose its two-party system.

Although Dupont and Bean say the two-party system shuts out certain individuals from town government and is dominated by the town Democratic Party, Deely says that is not true.

He notes that Republicans have successfully run for many positions in town and that Roosa does not belong to any political party. He adds that the town is in the midst of changing to a town administrator form of government and should not change everything at once.

"Let's not get salvation all at one time," Deely says. "Besides, I think the two-party system has worked. You've got two groups of people looking for candidates and advancing their point of view. That helps guarantee a contest."

But Bean says town government is dominated by a few people and the town representatives do not always stand up for the townspeople. Bean and former Selectman Joseph Castronova are circulating a petition that calls for getting rid of the town representative form of government in favor of an open town meeting government.

"The average citizen wants to have more control over how his money is being spent," Bean says. "The Department of Public Works was given a 3 percent raise last week. If it was an open town meeting, the town employees would have a tough time convincing the people that they need a 3 percent raise."

Adv rate 2/19/92

Lee man is charged in E. Otis armed assault

B Eagle 2/19/92

PITTSFIELD — A 20-year-old Lee man was ordered held on $50,000 bail at the Berkshire County House of Correction after pleading not guilty yesterday in Superior Court to a charge of armed assault at an East Otis home on Jan. 18.

Dimitri A. Freund of 200 Summer St. faces one count each of armed assault in a dwelling, attempting to commit a crime, and assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon, a knife.

On the date of the incident, state Trooper David G. LaVoice said that Freund entered the Route 23 home of Richard and Julia Strampach and their three young children at about 11 a.m.

LaVoice said that Freund — who was wearing a red ski mask and claiming he had a gun in a plastic bag he was wearing over his right arm — pushed his way inside after Richard Strampach opened the door.

Freund then threatened the family and demanded drugs, according to LaVoice. A short struggle followed, with Freund displaying a knife and holding it to Strampach's chest, again demanding drugs, LaVoice said.

LaVoice said that when Julia Strampach announced that she was calling police, the suspect fled. Freund later was apprehended about a half-mile away at the intersection of Routes 8 and 23.

Bail yesterday was set without prejudice because the defendant's attorney could not be present in the courtroom. Jeffrey A. Denner, returning a message from a Pittsburgh airport, said he will argue bail at a later date.

Denner, who practices out of Newton but owns a house in the Berkshires, said the first issue will be a psychiatric evaluation over the issue of criminal responsibility. He said that an evaluation, at the behest of the defense, is currently progressing.

"These allegations," Denner said, "are extremely out of character for this young man, which has forced us to take a very good look at the psychiatric perspective of what's going on in his life."

Eagle 2-5-92

City & Town

Lee hearing postponed for Schmidinger party

LEE — The School Committee has postponed a public hearing about condoms in the schools so members can attend a celebration for Lee skier Krista Schmidinger, who will return Tuesday night after competing in the Winter Olympics in Meribel, France.

School Superintendent Henry T. Zukowski said Thursday that Schmidinger is expected to arrive around 7 p.m. and that a townwide party is being planned at Greenock Country Club. The hearing had been scheduled for that hour.

The hearing, called to take comments about whether condoms should be made available at Lee High School, has been moved to March 3 at 7:30, said Zukowski. The regular School Committee meeting, also set for Tuesday, has been rescheduled for Feb. 25.

Schmidinger, 21, will fly into Boston, where her twin sister, Kim, will meet her, said Zukowski. Their parents, Elmar and Judith Schmidinger, will return on a different flight into Albany (N.Y.) Airport and are expected in Lee at around 8:30.

Zukowski said anyone interested in contributing money to help pay for the party may contact him, School Committee member Carol LePrevost or Lee High School dean of students Kathleen Bort.

81

CONGRATULATIONS "KRISTA"

"Our Home Town Olympian"

Lee's Olympic hero

With promises to return to Olympic glory in 1994, Krista Schmidinger made a triumphant return to Lee Tuesday as virtually the entire town celebrated her Olypmic feats.

Coming out of "nowhere," 21-year-old Schmidinger of Lee surprised the United States and the world last week as she soared through the Winter Olympics in Albertville, France.

Finishing second place in a training run and third place in the downhill combined race, she thrust herself into contention in the Olympics raising eyebrows for her unexpected speed hurdling down the French slopes.

Eyebrows, however, have long been raised in her hometown of Lee and Berkshire County where residents, friends and supporters have seen Krista and her identical twin sister, Kim, speeding down local slopes for many years.

To celebrate Krista's success, most of the town of Lee took part in Schmidinger's return home Tuesday night. Posters and banners were placed all over town last weekend. Stories were swapped about Krista's and her sister's prowess on the ski slopes. And on Tuesday, the town hosted a party for Schmidinger at the jam-packed Greenock Country Club.

"Nothing could be more awesome that the support from the town of Lee," said state Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins, D-Lee, one of many people who paraded through the event offering congratulations. "You have made us very proud."

Krista said she was stunned by the reception, escort through Lee by five firetrucks and outpouring of affection.

"I thought I'd be going home tonight to bed," said Schmidinger who has been competing abroad since November. "This is great. I love Lee."

While still in Europe, Schmidinger received dozens of congratulary letters, which she said she spent all night reading. "I've been overwhelmed,"

Krista Schmidinger *is the toast of the town this week in Lee after finishing 11th and 12th in two Olympic alpine skiing events .*

she said. "The support made the difference in the best run of my life."

The event was organized by Lee School Superintendent Henry Zukowski and Lee School Committee member Carol LeProvost who initiated the celebration. Close to 100 businesses and groups helped sponsor the event which was done completely through donations. In addition to the celebration, Beloit Corp. in Lenox paid for a surprise trip to Albertville for Schmidnger's parents Elmar and Judy. Elmar is a machinist at Beloit.

Although Schmidinger eventually finished 11th in the combined event and 12th in the downhill, commentators predict that her strong performance bodes well for the U.S. Ski Team.

The Schmidingers are already looking forward to 1994 when the Olympics will be held in Norway. The hope is that both Krista and Kim -- who was sidelined this year with a knee injury -- will compete in the Olympics.

"In 1994 we'll be doing our best," Kim said. "We're looking forward to it."

Advocate 2/19/92

Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

***Krista Schmidinger*, right, and her twin, Kim, ride through Lee on a fire truck on way to big welcome-home party.**

Homecoming

Eagle 2-19-92

Lee turns out in force for Schmidinger

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Lee embraced Olympic skier Krista Schmidinger in its collective arms last night with a dramatic welcome-home parade and party that drew hundreds of cheering townspeople into the streets and to a packed Greenock Country Club.

Five blaring fire engines formed a convoy that met Krista and her twin sister, Kim, as they paid their toll at the Lee exit ramp of the Massachusetts Turnpike. An entourage of television cameras, bright lights and reporters was waiting.

For Krista, the commotion was a complete surprise. Kim, however, knew in advance that something was being planned.

"I had no idea," Krista exclaimed, getting out of a van to embrace family friend Carol LeProvost, who instigated the event.

Krista Schmidinger was returning from France, where she competed in the Winter Olympics, placing second in the combined downhill race Feb. 11 and 13th in the combined slalom a week ago, resulting in an overall 11th-place finish for the combined event. She placed 12th in Saturday's regular downhill race.

Her sister, Kim, who suffered a knee injury last year, did not qualify for the Olympics. Both women have been members of the U.S. Ski Team for seven years.

Judging from last night's welcome, they both could have been gold medal winners. At the exit ramp, School Committee Chairman Edward M. Lahey relieved Kim at the wheel of the white van and the twins climbed atop a fire truck along with an entourage of reporters.

Fireman Richard "Smiley" Kearin, the driver of the engine, noted that he drove the girls to school on school buses when they were little.

As the fire trucks drove into town on Route 20, they passed R & W Inc. wrecking company, and seven of its trucks joined the parade with sirens blaring and lights flashing. Police cars, an ambulance and a slew of passenger cars also

KRISTA, continued on B4

Photos by Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Hundreds of fans wait for a chance to talk to and get an autograph from Krista Schmidinger at a party in her honor last night in Lee.

Eagle 2-19-92

Lee greets Olympian Schmidinger

■ KRISTA, from A1

joined the parade, which drove past dozens of waving, cheering onlookers.

At 10 miles per hour, the convoy made its way past crowds on Main Street, up Center Street and down Greylock, through the driveway at Lee High School, down Orchard Street and up West Park Street to Greenock Country Club, where the overflow crowd had spilled onto the front lawn.

As the convoy went through the driveway at Lee High School, the long line of cars stretched out behind the lead trucks.

"I don't believe it," said Deputy Fire Chief Alan "Sparky" Sparks, as he looked at the vast line of vehicles behind him.

Sparks said he has escorted a lot of high school sports champions through town on fire trucks, but he said last night's event generated the most enthusiasm he has seem.

"People will be complaining tomorrow about too much traffic," he said.

Greenock festivities

At Greenock Country Club, there were speeches from friends, town officials and dignitaries, plaques and gifts, jokes and sentimental stories about the Schmidinger twins and their rise to prominence. The twins' aunts, uncles, cousins and grandmother from the Boston area all showed up for the party. There were thanks to the people and businesses who donated a bottomless supply of food and other party items. Finally, there were some words from the twins.

'I wouldn't have done as well as I did without that support and encouragement.'

— Krista Schmidinger

Krista, struggling with emotions, told of how she had returned to her hotel room in France at 11 p.m. Monday night after watching the hockey competition to find a huge pile of mail on her bed. She had to get up at 3 a.m. to get a train to Zurich, but she stayed up anyway to read the mail — much of it from fans at home in Lee.

All week, she said, she had been receiving faxes and cards from the people at home, but had no idea what was in store for her last night.

Spurred by support

All that support, including a special letter and good-luck penny from Kim, "really made the difference in the run I had," she said.

"I wouldn't have done as well as I did without that support and encouragement," she said.

"At the opening ceremonies, I didn't really feel comfortable, I just felt lost," she said. All the encouragement from home, however, kept her inspired all week.

She said she was surprised at the start of the Winter Olympics when her parents showed up unexpectedly in Albertville, compliments of her father's employer, Beloit's Lenox Operations facility.

Concluding her remarks, she thanked her twin sister.

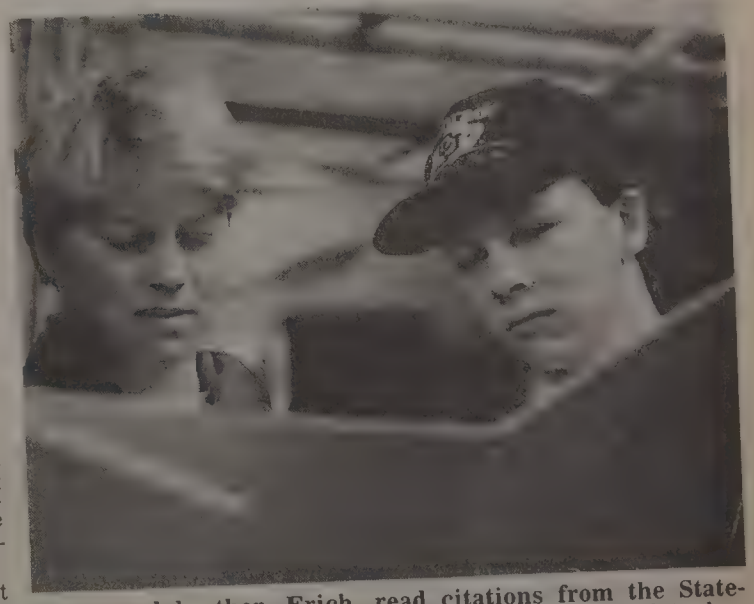
"Nothing would be possible without her," she said.

Kim also spoke, expressing pride in Krista and thanking the community for including her in the congratulations.

"It really inspires me in getting my knee back together, to get in there and beat everybody and do my best. I want to make you as proud of me as you are of Krista," she said.

Afterward, they were both swamped with beaming youngsters and adults seeking autographs and wanting to shake hands.

Krista had to step into the kitchen for a moment, however, to take a call from Sen. Edward M. Kennedy.



Krista and brother, Erich, read citations from the Statehouse presented to both Kim and Krista by Rep. Christopher Hodgkins.

Taconic girls challenge Lee hoop streak tonight

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

Scan Lee's 52-game winning streak and you'll find a couple of three-point wins and one five-point victory. That trio of games is the closest the Wildcats have come to a defeat since Lenox stopped Lee 63-49 on Feb. 20, 1990. Two of those recent narrow victories were against Taconic, which hosts Lee tonight at 7:30 in a rematch of last year's Berkshire County girls' basketball championship game won by Lee 61-56.

Lee finished the league slate 17-0 and is 19-0 overall. The Wildcats have won the state Division 3 title the past three years. Taconic concluded the league schedule at 13-1 and 16-2 overall. The Braves, whose only two defeats were to Lee, were beaten in last year's Western Mass. Division 2 finals.

Tickets go on sale at Taconic at 6:30 p.m. Admission will be $3 for

GIRLS, continued on C3

Eagle 2-20-92

Taconic, Lee girls play for county title tonight

■ GIRLS, from C1

adults and $2 for students.

This will be the fifth try against Lee in two seasons for Taconic, which returns its top eight players from a year ago. Lee defeated Taconic 71-57 in regular season last year before the Braves put up a gallant effort in defeat at Lee in the county title game.

This year, Lee earned a convincing 66-51 win at home in December before eking out a 52-49 win at Taconic on Feb. 3.

Lee coach Tom Cinella and Taconic coach Joe Racicot have no game secrets left to use against the other. Motivation might be the difference. Cinella needs to convince his squad yet one more time that Taconic is a viable threat while Racicot must find a way to convince his team they can defeat Lee, not just come close.

"Taconic's a great team loaded with talent," Cinella said. "And they're a veteran team — in fact it's the same lineup that we faced last year [in the county title game]. Our lineup, though, has changed dramatically."

It's true. The Wildcats have earned an undefeated season to date despite graduating its enourmously talented frontcourt. But senior point guard Katie Cinella (10.5 ppg.), who is nearing 100 games played in her varsity career, is back. And Racicot thinks the 5-foot-1 bundle of energy and talent has the ability to control the game.

"If Lee wins it will be because Katie has her way on the court," Racicot said. "You can get Lee to bend sometimes, but they never seem to break. That's because of Katie's ability to control things."

The Wildcats aren't as big as last year. But they're much faster, and all five starters know how to put the ball in the basket. Four of the starters completed league play averaging in double figures. Senior Jen Finnegan (13.5 ppg.) starts at guard while sophomores Allison Forfa (11.7. ppg.) and A.J. Skowron (10.1 ppg.) complement each other at forward.

Taconic's top offensive threat is senior forward Jamie Murphy, who reached the 1,000-point club earlier in the year. Murphy (17.7 ppg.) has averaged 19.5 points in the two games this year against Lee. Junior Kelly Daigneault (9.6 ppg) starts at center while junior Dana Hoskeer and senior Terry Pratt divide duties at the other forward.

Senior Tammy Tobin is the shooting guard while sophomore Mickie Turner (11.3) operates the point when the Braves have to run their halfcourt game.

The Braves, meanwhile, will stretch their defense around the perimeter, hoping to stop Lee's deadly outside shooting.

"We've also got to stop Skowron's dashes down the lane," Racicot said. "But there's not a lot of preparation left to do. It's time to go out and just play basketball."

Eagle 2-20-92

Braves' rally falls just short

Eagle 2/21/92

By Brian Sullivan
Berkshire Eagle Staff

PITTSFIELD — The final tally was 50-46, but it was the points that weren't scored that helped Lee defend its Berkshire County girls' basketball title last night. The Wildcats defeated Taconic before about 1,200 fans who nearly filled the Braves' gymnasium.

The Wildcats, now 20-0, extended their overall winning streak to 53 games. But Lee needed an enormous defensive effort in the second half to keep Taconic from fighting back from a 30-17 halftime deficit. Lee went stone cold, converting only three foul shots over the opening 8:45 of the second half.

The Wildcats, however, did a good job smothering the Taconic offense during that stretch. The Braves were only able to trim the margin to 33-28 during the blackout by the Lee offense. The Wildcats rebounded to take a nine-point lead (47-38) and showed enough poise in the final three minutes to stifle one last Braves' charge.

"Maybe we just like pulling these games out at the end," said Lee senior guard Jen Finnegan, who had a game-high 12 points. "One of our goals this year was to be one of the top defensive teams in the state. And we know if we play tough, we'll come out on top."

"You're always a little nervous in a game like this," said Lee forward A.J. Skowron (10 points, 8 rebounds), whose top-of-the-key jumper with 7:15 left in the game was the first Wildcats basket in the second half. "But we were confident we could pull it off."

A pattern for Taconic

Taconic, now 16-3, has suffered all its losses to the Wildcats this year. The last game, which was played at Taconic on Feb. 3, was a similar contest that saw Lee win 52-49. In last year's county title game, Lee defeated Taconic 61-56. Overall, Taconic is 0-5 against Lee in games played the past two years.

"We need to make our easy shots and cut down on our turnovers to beat Lee," said Taconic sophomore guard Mickie Turner, who is starting to notice a pattern. "We come back, they get the final basket and we don't."

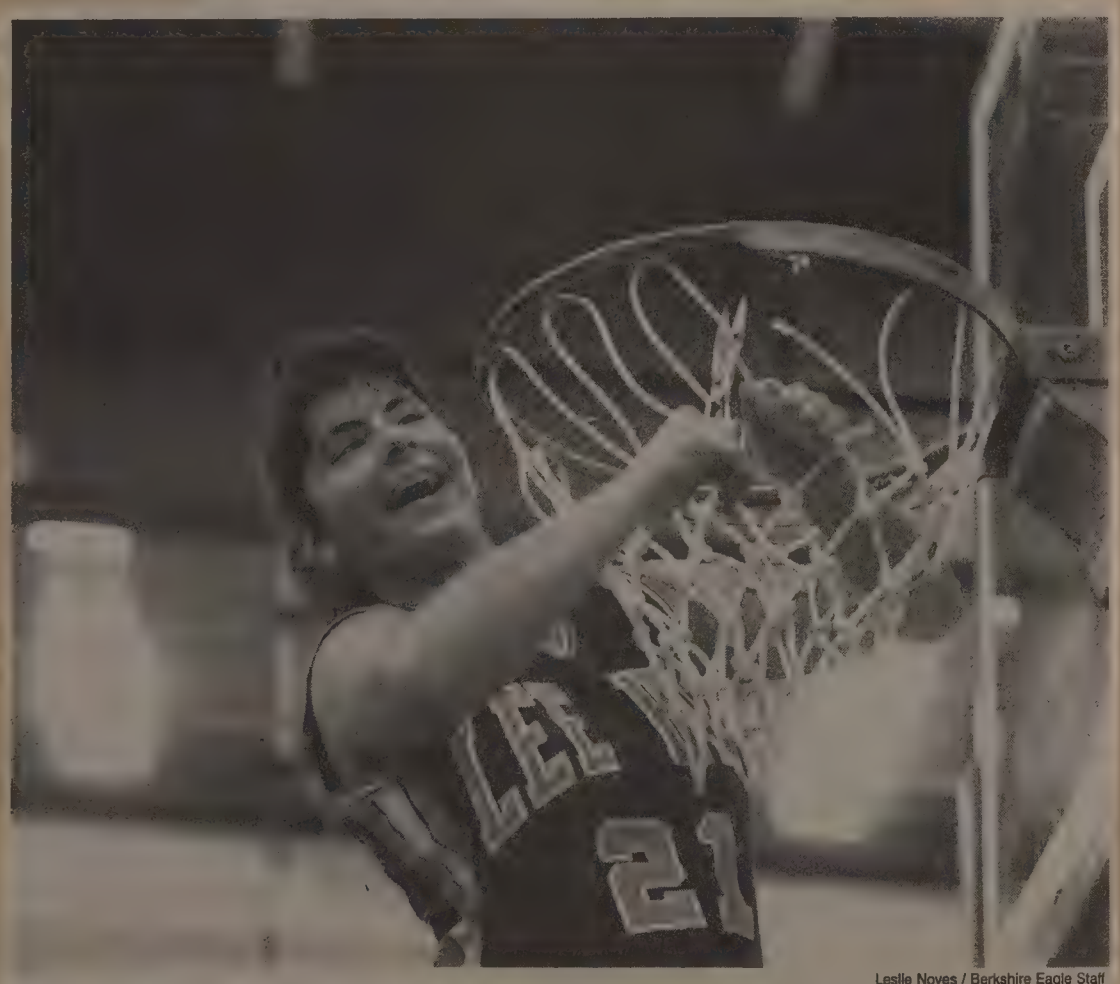
Bench sparks Wildcats

The Lee bench (Sarah Blaisdell, Dina Souza and Kelsey Scarpa) sparked a first-half rally that broke open a tight game and sent the Wildcats off the court at halftime with a 13-point lead. The Wildcats' Katie Cinella threw in a left-handed hook off the glass at the buzzer and confidently led her club off the floor.

"The only way to catch up in the second half was to play some defense," Taconic coach Joe Racicot said. "That was the key to the comeback trail."

The Braves' defense and the sudden rash of misfired Lee shots

COUNTY, continued on C3



Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

It's two straight Berkshire County titles for Lee sophomore A.J. Skowron, who helps out in cutting the net down following the Wildcats' 50-46 win over Taconic. Skowron had 10 points for Lee, which defeated Taconic in last year's county championship game 61-56.

Eagle 2-21-92

Wildcat girls win county hoop title

COUNTY, from C1

Photo by Warren Fowler

Olympic skier Krista Schmidinger makes a triumphant return to her hometown.

Krista Schmidinger Given Hero's Welcome in Lee

Berk Rec 2-21-92

By David A. Smith

LEE—Inside the Greenock Country Club in Lee on the night of the New Hampshire Primary, there may have been a few people talking politics, but the political candidates were not the main topic of conversation.

While several hundred people crowded in and around the clubhouse, the town of Lee officially welcomed home its pride and joy, Olympian Krista Schmidinger and her sister, Kim.

Prior to the twins' arrival, Carol Le Provost spearheaded the effort to organize what some have called the biggest party in the history of Lee. By the time the athletes arrived Le Provost had enlisted the aid of 81 local sponsors.

A virtual smorgasbord was laid out, newspaper articles of Kim and Krista's skiing successes were posted about the clubhouse, American flags hung from the walls, bunches of balloons were clumped about the room, and two huge cakes bore the inscription, "Thanks Krista and Kim."

Albertville

Finally the moment came. Cheers erupted and a four-piece band boomed out "God Bless America" as the sisters made their way into the building. Friends and supporters, eager to talk with the twins, crowded in to listen to a barage of congratulations from various community leaders and members.

"I just want to say one thing

Continued on A9

Berk. Rec 2-21-92

Olympic Champion Thrills Lee

By Monte Morin

Olympic Tribute, B6-7

LEE—It was the type of celebration normally reserved for presidents and returning astronauts — only the return of Olympian Krista Schmidinger was a lot more important to this town.

At a time when some folks fear the economy's locked into a graveyard spin, the ozone's shriveling and the newspapers seem to report only the bad news — the full-throttle celebration of a local hero was just the thing to break the gloom.

"It's a great pick-me-up," said Michael Simone as he awaited the arrival of the celébrated sisters at the Greenock Country Club. "People are going through a lot of hard times with unemployment and all. This kind of brings us all together, these kids."

Simone's wife Ann, agreed. "This is the biggest event Lee's ever had."

Celebrating as only a small, close-knit town can, the country club reception evoked the spirit of a large wedding or a Fourth of July picnic.

"I think this will change the minds of people who think Lee

Continued on A9

Berk Rec. 2-21-92

Olympic Champion Thrills Lee, Brings Renewed Esprit Home

Continued from A1

is a town with a lot of community problems," said state Representative and Lee native Christopher Hodgkins. "Lee is a very passionate town. We work hard and we play hard and we're proud of our own."

As school superintendent and former Marine Henry Zukowski ordered civilians to eat more Swedish meatballs, swarms of children weaved between the legs of standing adults and waved American flags.

Finding a quiet corner to eat ice cream in, Sister Maureen Carmody reflected on what the evening's message was.

"A lot of people put young people down today, because a lot of things come too easily for them," said the St. Mary's School teacher. "But this shows just how successful they can be. I hope this will inspire other kids to focus on what they're good at and work hard."

The crush of admirers that packed the clubhouse made it impossible for everyone to catch a glimpse of the sisters, but that was just fine for some. Just being on the edge of the celebration was enough to lift the spirit.

"We're welcoming them like heroes because they're the best Lee has to offer," said Ottavio "Spike" Biasia as he bellied up to the 19th hole. "This helps the whole town. It brings out the best in us."

Eagle 2/21-92

Tyringham teen acquitted of assaulting Lee policeman

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

GREAT BARRINGTON — A 17-year-old Tyringham youth was acquitted yesterday of trespassing and assault and battery on a police officer in a case that sparked a controversy in Lee over tensions between the town's police and young people.

After a 10-minute trial that involved only the testimony of Lee Police Officer William J. Bartini, Judge W. Michael Ryan found Steven Curtin not guilty of the two charges.

Ryan also cleared Curtin of an unrelated charge of disturbing the peace after prosecutor Mark Pasquariello said the police officer in that case was in Florida and not available to testify.

Two others charged

Bartini delivered a brief account of the Dec. 16 incident, in which a fight took place between himself and a 16-year-old. That boy and another juvenile were also arrested, and their cases are set for trial next week.

Bartini said he was off duty and at home alone at around 9 on the night of Dec. 16 when someone — a juvenile — knocked on his door and "asked me to step outside and fight."

Under questioning from Pasquariello, Bartini said a fight took place on the porch of his duplex. Two other police officers eventually arrived to respond to the incident, he said.

After the altercation, Bartini said, he saw Curtin standing on his lawn, about 25 feet away from the porch.

"I told him he was on private property and I suggested he get in his car and leave," said Bartini.

Bartini said Curtin was "upset and crying" because he had tried to persuade the other boy not to confront Bartini. Bartini said he made a second request that Curtin leave, and he did.

Pasquariello rested his case. Defense attorney Louis Oggiani also rested his case without calling Curtin to testify.

Ryan inquired about the assault and battery allegation, about which Bartini had made no mention.

Pasquariello replied that there was "some evidence" that Curtin was a "joint venturer" in the assault and battery on a police officer, based on testimony that Curtin had tried to talk the other boy out of confronting Bartini but then "accompanied him" to Bartini's house.

"He was there and willing" to assist the youth, said Pasquariello.

Curtin had given a more detailed account of the incident in January. He said he was riding past Bartini's house in a car when he saw his friend involved in a fight with Bartini.

Sprayed with Mace

Curtin said that Bartini had sprayed the youth in the face with Mace and that Bartini was hitting the youth while he lay on his stomach on the ground, being handcuffed by the other officers.

Questioned after the trial yesterday, Curtin stood by his original story.

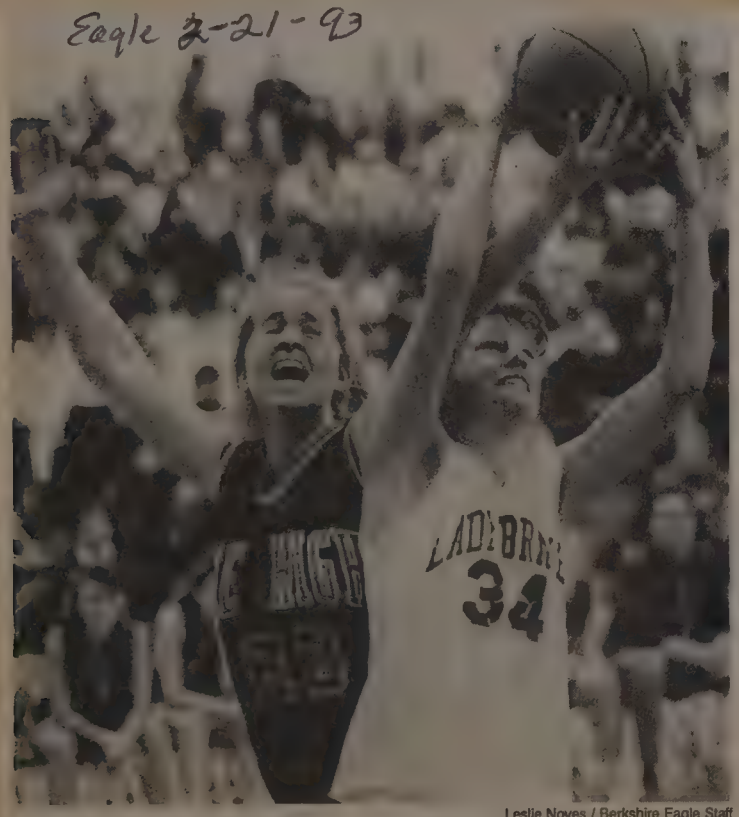
The argument reportedly arose over a young woman.

The incident prompted a number of parents and teen-agers to attend a Selectmen's meeting in early January, demanding that someone respond to reports that certain police officers were using excessive force.

Since then, the Selectmen have established a task force to look into relations between the police and the community. At several of those meetings Bartini's name has come up among parents who have expressed frustration with the Police Department.

The police are scheduled to meet in a closed-door session with the task force next Thursday. Except for Officer Joseph Buffis, the Police Department's representative to the task force, police officers have not attended any of the meetings.

Eagle 2-21-93



Leslie Noyes / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee's Sheila Collins, left, tries to come over the top for a rebound against Taconic's Dana Hoskeer during play in last night's Berkshire County basketball championship at Taconic. Lee defended its title with a 50-46 victory.

Eagle 2/21/92

Clarinet clinic, display offered at Lee Library

LEE — The Clarinet Society in the Berkshires has announced that it will sponsor a clarinet clinic Saturday from 10 to 2 at the Lee Library.

The event will feature a display of antique and modern clarinets and literature on the development of the instrument.

Admission is free, and the public is invited. Participants have been encouraged to bring their clarinets.

More information may be obtained by calling 637-8213.

Eagle 2-21-93

Police probing break-in, theft at Lee Texaco

LEE — Lee Police are investigating a break-in and theft that occurred early yesterday morning at the Lee Texaco on Housatonic Street.

Officer Henry Smachetti said a police officer noticed the door to the station ajar at about 2:15 a.m. yesterday. A closer check found that the door appeared to have been pried open, and an investigation revealed that approximately $100 was taken from a drawer, said Smachetti.

The franchise is owned by John Jones of Lee, he said.

Schmidinger Given Hero's Homecoming

Continued from A1

Krista, 'Welcome home,'" said Le Provost, in the opening remarks. "We're all so glad you're home, and you're home safe, and you did great."

State Senator Jane Swift, R-North Adams, presented Krista with an official citation from the Massachusetts State Senate.

It is usually difficult to bring up Berkshire County on the Senate floor, said Swift. "But for the past couple of weeks, all anybody wanted to talk about in the Senate was Lee and Krista Schmidinger."

"You put our little town on the map," said Selectman Marty Deely. "I hope you're proud of yourselves because we're proud of you. We were cheering for you and behind you all the way."

"Being from Lee, the words can't ring any louder when we see the signs and the signs say, 'The Pride of Lee,' because that's what you are," said State Rep. Christopher Hodgkins, D-Lee. He also presented both Krista and Kim with citations from the Statehouse.

"Nothing can be more prestigious and nothing can be more awesome than all the support of your family and the town of Lee," said Hodgkins, who also asked the twins for an autograph and gave Krista a letter from Governor William Weld. "You made us very proud."

"You've had the press that many of us would dream to have," he said, and alluded to the success of the Lee High School girls' basketball team. "You continue with that spirit and you continue with that pride and nothing can be more than thank you for doing that for all of us."

"We want you to know how very proud we are of you," said Donna Messana on behalf of Beloit's Lenox Operations Facility where Elmar Schmidinger works. When Elmar and his wife, Judy, did not think they could afford to go to France, Beloit picked up the tab.

"It was our pleasure, no it was our privilege, to send your parents to see you," said Messana.

After words from various family members, friends and a former coach, Krista finally stepped into the spotlight, receiving the biggest applause of the evening.

"I really don't know what to say," she said, but told of how after returning to her room at 11 p.m. from a Feb. 17 hockey game in France, she found a pile of letters on her bed.

Even though she had to get up at 3 a.m. to catch a train to Zurich, Switzerland, she stayed up to read the mail. "It was awesome," she said of the letters, much of them from Lee. "I was thinking of where I came from."

"It's been an incredible week for me and my emotions have just spilled over," she continued. "I just want to thank everyone."

She also told of how she felt lost during the Olympic opening ceremonies, and how the communications from home, helped inspire her efforts.

"With all the incoming mail from you guys and all the faxes, it just made all the difference."

"Nothing would be possible without her," said Krista, thanking her sister, Kim, who also addressed the crowd.

$6

Feb 23, 1992

Defending champ Lee girls seeded No. 1

By Howard Herman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

WMass. Basketball

The Lee High girls' basketball team begins its quest for a fourth consecutive Massachusetts Division 3 title as the No. 1 seed in the Western Mass. Division 3 tournament field.

The Berkshire County champion Wildcats are the only Berkshire team to earn a top seed in the tournament, the first year of the open tournament. Every basketball team in the state was eligible to participate in this year's tournament. Of Berkshire County schools, only the McCann and Mount Greylock boys and McCann, Mount Greylock, Monument Mountain and Drury girls did not choose to enter. There are 44 boys' teams entered in the three divisions, while 35 girls' teams are playing.

The top area boys' seed went to Berkshire County champion St. Joseph's. The Crusaders were given the second seed behind Hampshire County League co-champion Smith Academy in Division 3.

Girls' tournament

In the 12-team Division 3 field, Lee's major competition may come from Franklin County champion and second seed Smith Academy. Lenox received the sixth seed in the Division 3 tournament, Mount Everett is eighth, and St. Joseph's is the 12th seed. Those three open play Wednesday night as Lenox hosts No. 11 Pioneer. No. 9 Pathfinder is at Mount Everett, and the Crusaders are at No. 5 Hopkins Academy.

Taconic, Berkshire County's Northern Division champion and last year's Western Mass. Division 2 runnerup, received the third seed in the 12-team Division 2 field. Bi-County League champion Hampshire Regional and Tri-County champ Palmer were tied in the power ratings, and Hampshire took the top seed via a coin flip. Wahconah is sixth seed and Hoosac Valley is No. 8. Hoosac hosts No. 9 Athol, and Wahconah hosts No. 11 Holyoke Catholic on Wednesday.

In Division 1, Pittsfield received the No. 5 seed in the 11-team field. Valley Wheel champion Amherst earned the No. 1 seed. The Generals don't play a preliminary game but will open at No. 4 Northampton on Friday, Feb. 28, at 7 p.m.

Boys' tournament

Pittsfield High got the third seed in the 15-team Division 1 boys' field. The Generals follow Valley League and defending state champion Springfield Central and Suburban League champion Amherst. Taconic was given the 14th seed in the tourney. The Braves open on Tuesday in a preliminary-round game at 10th seeded Agawam. The winner will play No. 6 Chicopee High on Thursday. Pittsfield opens Saturday, against the winner of Thursday's game at Chicopee.

Wahconah, the defending Western Mass. Division 2 champion and state runnerup, is the third seed in the 10-team Division 2 tournament. Greenfield is top seeded while Hampshire League co-champion Athol is second. Drury is seeded fifth, Monument Mountain seventh and Hoosac Valley 10th. Hoosac opens at Monument on Thursday, while Drury opens at No. 4 Southwick and Wahconah hosts No. 6 Easthampton on Saturday.

St. Joseph's is part of the 19-team Division 3 field. Lee was seeded eighth, Mount Everett is No. 12, and Lenox picked up the 14th seed. On Tuesday, the Wildcats host No. 17 Mohawk Trail, the Eagles play host to 13th seeded Belchertown, and Lenox is at No. 11 Palmer. The Crusaders open play in the quarterfinals on Saturday.

The entire list of teams in Western Mass. boys' and girls' tournaments can be found on the Scoreboard, Page C4.

Lee asking voters' advice on trash pickup, landfill

Eagle 2-24-92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The brouhaha over the shutdown of the town dump last December has prompted the Board of Public Works to ask voters if they want the town to get into the garbage business.

Voters will be asked on the spring election ballot whether they want the town to take over the job of garbage collection or to open a new dump. Both questions are non-binding referendums.

Either option would require a tax hike for all town residents, regardless of how much — or how little — garbage they dispose of each week.

Chairman John L. Piacquadio said the board has continued to receive complaints about the dump closing and the resulting increased cost of garbage disposal. Private haulers hiked their rates in order to deliver the town's rubbish to the Vicon Recovery Associates' plant in Pittsfield, where it is burned.

A dump sticker used to cost $25. But with the dump closed, the cost of private garbage collection now ranges from $15 per month, or $180 per year, to $23 per month, or $276 per year, depending on the trucking company.

But both hauling companies, Lenox Trucking and Daley & Sons, say their prices are flexible for people who don't need weekly garbage collection.

If the town takes over the job, by contracting with a municipal hauler, the cost of the service would be added to the tax rate. With the total cost of municipal hauling estimated at roughly $400,000 per year, a homeowner whose property is assessed at $110,000 would pay about $110 per year in additional property taxes, said J. Peter Scolforo, superintendent of public works.

And such a tax hike would require an override of the Proposition 2½ taxation limits, which was unsuccessful at the polls last year.

Nelson Daley, owner of Daley & Sons

TRASH, continued on B3

J. Peter Scolforo
'Rather keep it private'

Lee asks voters' advice

■ TRASH, from B1

trucking company, said a municipal garbage pickup would hurt a lot of elderly retired people in town, who need garbage collection only one or two times per month. They would be required to pay higher taxes for garbage disposal, even though they don't need weekly service, he said.

Scolforo said he prefers the current system of private collection to the costly prospect of town collection and higher taxes.

"I really feel that I'd rather keep it private, but it is cost-effective for some people to have municipal pickup," said Scolforo. "I'd like to keep it going like it is and see how it goes."

Piacquadio, however, said he thinks town residents would benefit financially from municipal pickup.

A second question will ask voters if they want the town to establish a new landfill. But the cost of establishing a new landfill would be at least $2 million to $3 million, said Piacquadio, a figure that would dramatically impact tax rates.

The dump was closed because the state is enforcing rules requiring any unlined landfills to be shut down by 1994. While there was still space left in Lee's landfill, there was concern that by waiting until 1994 Lee risked being shut out of Vicon, which is seeing increasing demand for its incinerators.

He stressed that the cost of a municipal garbage collection system is not yet confirmed, since town officials are still waiting to find out how many tons of Lee rubbish are being disposed of at Vicon.

Opening up a new dump in town would require a liner to prevent waste from leaking into the ground. And it would also require improvements to the town sewer system, said Piacquadio.

Eagle 2/24/92

87

Closed session with police called inappropriate

Eagle 4/25/92

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Selectmen have advised the police-community relations task force against meeting in executive session with the town's police officers Thursday night.

"Even if you could stretch your interpretation of the open meeting law, it's bad PR," said Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. DuPont at last night's meeting.

Selectman Diane Roosa said that she spoke with Berkshire County District Attorney Gerard D. Downing last week and that he said an executive session would be inappropriate under the circumstances.

But if the doors are not closed, the police will not come, according to Officer Joseph Buffis, who is a member of the task force.

"I wasn't aware of this," said Buffis, contacted after last night's meeting. "If there's no executive session, then we probably won't have any input from the Police Department."

DuPont, however, had said earlier that "if they won't speak because they want to do it behind closed doors, it sends a message to the town. It's bad PR."

The Selectmen appointed the task force to look into parents' charges of serious tensions between the police and the town's young people. There have been complaints that certain officers have used excessive force with teen-agers, that Chief Edward J. Finnegan is inaccessible and that there are poor communications between the police and parents of young offenders.

Some task force members have said that they would not object to an executive session and that there appeared to be legal grounds for such a meeting.

But the Selectmen disagreed last night.

According to the open meeting law, there are several circumstances under which the public can be barred from the meeting of a government board.

An executive session can be called for discussion of the reputation, character, physical health or mental health of an employee — but not to discuss professional conduct.

A meeting can also be closed to hear complaints, charges or legal action against an individual.

"The task force wasn't set up to deal with discussions about individuals," he said. "The board is not supposed to be doing that."

Charles O'Neil, a member of the task force who was at the Selectmen's meeting last night, said closing the doors will likely mean the task force will not hear from the police.

"All I can say is we were told that no members of the Police Department will talk with the press and the public there," he said.

Margaret Biron, a parent who has kept close tabs on how the town is responding to complaints about the Police Department, said last night she is less concerned about the executive session than she is about finding a resolution to the problems.

"My ultimate goal would be to get something accomplished," said Biron.

Buffis said last night he would relay the Selectmen's comments to [illegible]

Lee to test dam sirens monthly

Eagle 2-25-93

LEE — The town's flood control sirens for the October Mountain Watershed dams will be tested monthly starting March 7, said Kenneth J. LaBier, Civil Defense director.

The sirens will be tested on the first Saturday of each month between noon and 12:15. They will sound for approximately 30 seconds with a steady tone.

The sirens are at the intersection of Washington Mountain and Woodland roads, at the Central Fire Station and at the sewer plant on Route 102, all areas that would likely be threatened by a dam breach in the watershed.

During an actual alert, the sirens would reach a steady tone for three minutes.

Further information will be distributed to houses that lie in the inundation areas, with instructions on evacuation and notification procedures.

Eagle 2-25-93

Lee inspector sees hazards in design of housing units

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Building Inspector Robert Lester said last night there are safety hazards and "accidents waiting to happen" in the design of most of the 16 low-income housing units being built on Marble Street.

Lester told the Selectmen that he recently visited the construction site and saw potential fire hazards in the design of laundry rooms in many of the apartment units.

When he relayed his concerns to the architects, he said, they disagreed and insisted no changes were needed.

"It doesn't comply with code, as far as I'm concerned," he said. "I'm a taxpayer in town, and I don't need the added liability."

The public housing project, which includes eight duplex apartments on a single parcel of town-owned land, is being developed in conjunction with the Berkshire Regional Housing Authority and will be supervised by the Lee Housing Authority. Lester said plans call for completion by the summer.

But he will not sign any occupancy permits, he said, unless design changes are made.

Specifically, he said most apartments have the boiler exposed in the laundry room, underneath a staircase. The staircase is the only exit from the second floor and should not pass over a boiler, which is a potential fire hazard.

In addition, he said, the boiler should be partitioned off and locked to prevent tenants — particularly children — from tampering. the boiler will be handled by the Lee Housing Authority, he said.

The stairway over the boiler is open, "a great place for junk to be piled," Lester continued. If a fire started in the boiler, it could quickly spread to the open stairs.

"The boiler should be separate from the stairwell and the laundry room," he said.

Lester wrote a letter last week to the architectural firm of Dietz & Co. of Springfield, expressing his concerns.

The architects believe that the houses are "attached single-family homes," which allow a different design standard, he said. Lester, however, said he views the project as multiple-family housing.

If Lester refuses to grant an occupancy permit for the buildings, the developers can appeal his decision.

Wildcats erupt for 89-77 win

LEE — After a postponement on Tuesday, the Lee High boys' basketball team opened play in the Western Mass. Division 3 tournament last night with an 89-77 home win over Mohawk Regional.

Lee, which is the eighth seed in the tournament, improved its overall mark to 12-9. Mohawk, which was the 17th seed, ended the year with a 5-15 record.

The Wildcats get no rest, continuing play tonight at home against ninth-seeded Hampshire Regional, which defeated Smith Vocational 68-41 on Tuesday night.

The 89 points scored by Lee represented a season high.

Lee led 42-28 at halftime, but came unglued early in the second stanza when Mohawk went on a 10-2 run that cut the lead to 44-38. But Lee's Aaron Brighenti hit the first of his four second-half, three-point baskets and sparked the Wildcats to a 58-44 lead.

Mohawk rallied again, cutting the margin to 69-61. But Jeff Puleri (19 points) hit a couple of jumpers to keep the Mohawk comeback at bay.

Brighenti, who finished with a game-high 29 points, had six treys overall. Rich Wescott had 10 points for the Wildcats along with Kevin Burch and Mike Curtin, who scored their 10 points off the bench.

Eagle 2/21/92

Advocate 2/28/92

Oak 'n Spruce developer guilty of bribery

A developer of Oak n' Spruce resort in Lee who is no longer affiliated with the complex has pleaded guilty to bribery in a New Jersey federal court.

John C. Manoog Jr., 62, of Osterville, pleaded guilty earlier this month for paying kickbacks to officers at the failed First Atlantic Savings & Loan Association, according to an article in the *Cape Cod Times*.

The savings-and-loan bank and Oak n' Spruce were taken over by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. two years ago. Oak n' Spruce is now under new management and officials at the resort say the conviction is unrelated to current activities at the resort.

"Whatever happened, happened," says Oak n' Spruce general manager Paul D. Croce Sr. "We're working things out here. No matter what the paper says, we're still here and we're here to stay."

Manoog told the court that he paid bribes totaling $368,984 to two officers in the bank from 1986 to 1988 to secure millions of dollars in loans for the time-share-and-resort development. In all, about $18 million was lent to Diversified Resorts for Oak n' Spruce and other resorts owned by the company owned by Manoog.

Both Massachusetts and Connecticut investigated hundreds of complaints of wrongdoing in selling time-shares at Oak n' Spruce. In Connecticut, the resort was ordered to pay over $400,000 in restitution and civil penalties.

The resort filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy last March and is in the process of reorganizing. Croce says the resort has almost completed this action and will soon be out of Chapter 11 at which time it will be given back to Diversified Resorts, according to the Lee Assessors.

Bailey, Pascucci running for Lee Selectmen

Lee voters will have at least two new faces to pick from for selectman at the annual election on May 18.

Veteran local government officials Aldo Pascucci and Gordon Bailey, both of whom serve on the Lee Planning Board, have taken out nomination papers to run for a three-year seat on the board of selectmen.

Incumbent Selectmen's Chairman Joseph F. Dupont says he has not decided yet whether he will run for re-election.

"I had 10 people come up to me the other day in Town Hall and ask me to run," Pascucci says. "It's a great time to be involved in town government with change in government to an administrator and the industrial park coming on Route 102. I'm the kind of person who listen to what the people have to say and to pay attention."

Both Pascucci and Bailey say they will run as unenrolled candidates.

"That way you're not obligated to anybody," Pascucci says.

Pascucci has been involved in community organizations for many years, having founded the Band Parents Club, been president of the Babe Ruth League and been president of a local union while working for General Electric in Pittsfield.

Bailey, too, says he would like to bring a fresh approach to the Selectmen and is running as an unenrolled candidate.

"I can help bring a more positive influence to the Selectmen," says Bailey who has been on the Planning Board for close to four years. "I can help bring a lot of enthusiasm that I haven't seen there for many years. I would like to be part of the team that sets up how the new town administrator will work in town."

Bailey says he would like to bring more progressive and proactive thinking to the board which he says should be paying more attention to the concerns of townspeople.

Advocate 3/26/92

88

2/26/92 Advocate

Lee heads into discord over budgetary blues

Escalating insurance costs eat into crossing guards, salary hikes, teachers and more

With the Lee town budget still a month from completion, the town already appears headed on a collision course of conflicting priorities.

Town officials are divided on where cuts should be made in the town budget and are very wary of asking voters to raise the provision of Proposition 2 1/2.

"All we are is frustrated," says Lee Selectman Martin Deely. "I expect an awful lot of rancor on a lot of things this year."

Driving the issue to a crisis point is the rapidly rising cost of health insurance.

The line item has become the second-largest single item in the town budget. Officials estimate next year's health insurance will cost the town about $800,000.

Insurance costs have risen so rapidly this year that the selectmen and Finance Committee Chairman John DeVarennes say they will have to hold a special town meeting to raise an extra $113,000 for insurance payments this year.

To try to control the situation, the selectmen appointed a special task force this week to find ways to reduce the insurance budget.

While officials hope to find a less-expensive insurance package, they are also considering cuts in health-insurance coverage for town employees.

The town now pays for 90 percent of insurance costs with employees paying the remaining 10 percent. Also, DeVarennes says the town should consider reducing the number of town employees and officers who receive insurance from the town.

"We're going to have to decide where we'll spend the money and where we won't. Something's going to have to go — and it's going to get worse."

"We've got people who are getting paid $5,000 a year by the town and are receiving $5,000 in insurance," DeVarennes said Monday night. "It's perfectly legal for anyone with any sense of economics, it doesn't make sense."

The rising cost of insurance is squeezing the rest of the town budget. Limited by Proposition 2 1/2 and a stagnant economy, town officials say the only way to make up for spiraling insurance costs is to cut other budgets.

But that will not be easy.

DeVarennes gave a preliminary list of items that could be cut from next year's budget that included eliminating a crossing guard, postponing the purchase of a police crusier (thus leaving the town with one), turning off 18 street lights, eliminating an annual payment to the Lee Youth Association and several other items.

DeVarennes' preliminary list prompted an outcry Monday. School committee member Carol LeProvost angrily rebuked the town and the police department for even considering the removal of a school crossing guard.

"You're putting the safety of our children in jeopardy," LeProvost said. "I can't believe they'd cut a crossing guard instead of finding something else. It disgusts me."

Even though town officials said it was still unclear whether the position would be removed, LeProvost vowed that she would pack the selectmen's office and the town meeting to protect the job.

"If that's the attitude of the police department and this town, then the school department will get rid of the football team," LeProvost said. LeProvost added that the school department is feeling the budgetary pressure and may be forced to eliminate jobs in the schools.

Joseph Castronova, a former selectman, accused the town of threatening positions such as the crossing guard as a way to force the town into approving an override of Proposition 2 1/2.

Castronova and others say the town should be cutting its budget by freezing salaries and do a more efficient job of collecting taxes.

"You gave the department of public works employees a 3 percent raise earlier this month," Castronova told the board. "Somebody has to stop the wheel."

But the selectmen say it is too preliminary to say what will or will not be cut, because the town does not know how much it will receive in state aid. Prospects, however, appear dim.

"We are going to have to decide where we'll spend the money and where we won't," Deely says. "Something's going to have to go – and it's only going to get worse."

85 applications for Lee town administrator

In less than a month, the town of Lee has received 85 applications for the town's recently created town administrator position.

Members of the Lee Town Administrator Search Committee have judged the quality of applicants to be good, saying that applications have been received from all over the country, near and far.

"We've gotten them from California to Florida to down the street," says Lee Selectman Martin Deely, who adds that the number of applications from Berkshire County has been less than expected.

The seven-person committee will choose from the pool of applicants 10-to-12 semifinalists, whom the committee will then interview in closed-door sessions. The committee will select the final three applicants, whom the selectmen will interview in public session.

Lee police officers say teens need more guidance at home

■ LEE, from B1

Eagle 2/28/92

That the police attended last night's meeting was significant because initially officers refused to speak to the task force unless they could do so in a closed-door session.

The Selectmen had advised the task force — set up to examine tensions between the police and the town's teen-agers — against holding an executive session, and the issue did not arise during the meeting.

Officer Joseph Buffis, the Police Department's representative on the task force, said a lot of discussion went into convincing officers that it would be beneficial to show up last night. In addition to Loring, Officers William Bartini, Adrian Kohlenberger and William Tierney attended. Special Police Officers Donna Tyer and Charles Roode also attended.

Chief Edward J. Finnegan is on vacation.

Loring said most encounters with young people are short ones — breaking up large crowds on sidewalks, for example. But occasionally there is a ringleader who wants to "flex his muscles."

Task force chairman Steven Cozzaglio, principal of Lee Central School, asked Loring about allegations that some police officers were verbally abusing young people.

"We feel the Police Department has operated in a professional manner," Loring replied.

When people treat officers abusively, spitting on them for example, "we can't lower ourselves to the kids' level," he said.

The discussion touched on the fact that many parents and young people are unaware of laws and certain rights they do and don't have. There also was talk about parents who can't be reached when a young person gets in trouble and faces arrest, parents who are defensive of their children's conduct and, also, parents who are grateful to be called when their children get into trouble.

Responding to a question about how police officers could be more involved in community activities, Loring replied that two officers coach football in town and others are involved in the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program.

But after about 30 minutes, the discussion got off track and many questions were left hanging as audience members interjected comments and suggestions, and task force members interrupted each other.

Among questions that were asked and went unanswered were: What kinds of solutions would improve the Police Department's image in the community? What kinds of in-service training would be productive for officers? What kind of philosophy is laid out by the police chief? How often are staff meetings held?

Task force members agreed that the schools could be of help in educating children and their parents about the laws and their rights. And they agreed that young people today don't have the respect for authority that young people did 20 or 30 years ago. Broken families, negative media, drugs and alcohol problems are pervasive, they said.

Afterward, James Franz of the federal Department of Education delivered a discussion about how he came to become a police-community relations specialist after spending 18 years in a police cruiser. The task force is considering engaging him to help improve relations between the police and the community.

Officer Kohlenberger commented after the police discussion that "good things came out on both sides. ... We feel the problem is not related to us."

Hodgkins Honored For Children's Work

Berkshire Eagle Feb 28 92

LEE–Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins has been cited by the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children by for his voting record on legislation promoting the welfare of children.

The citation came in the form of a State House legislative watch score card, in which Hodgkins received a grade of "A" in all five areas: effort, perseverance, caring for children, leadership, and awareness. The grades were based upon votes made on several pieces of legislation affecting children and general advocacy for the protection of children.

Lee teen admits assault

Eagle 2-28-92

GREAT BARRINGTON — A 16-year-old Lee boy who was involved in a fight with a local police officer yesterday agreed to plead guilty to an assault and battery charge in Southern Berkshire District Court. Several other charges were dropped in exchange for the plea, according to his mother.

The Dec. 16 incident sparked a storm of controversy in town over what some parents and youths described as excessive force on the part of an off-duty police officer, William Bartini.

He was accused of spraying Mace into the youth's face and hitting and kicking him while he was handcuffed on the ground.

The boy's mother, who asked that her son's and her name not be used because of his age, said her son was placed on probation for a year and is required to do 15 hours of community service.

She said because a plea-bargain agreement was reached with the district attorney's prosecutor, there was no testimony from the boy or from witnesses who observed the altercation between her son and Bartini. Her son did not deny striking Bartini, she said.

Similar charges against another juvenile boy were dismissed by Judge James Dohoney, she said.

In the Feb. 20 trial of 17-year-old Steven Curtain of Tyringham — a witness to the incident who also was charged and acquitted of assault and battery and disorderly conduct — Bartini acknowleged a fight took place.

He testified that the 16-year-old came to his house and asked him to step outside and fight, which Bartini did.

She said now she is placing her confidence in the Lee Selectmen to adopt whatever recommendations come from the police-community relations task force.

Eagle

Lee mill shuts down

2-25-92

LEE — Mountain Mill, the Lee operation of Westfield River Paper Co., will shut down today for good, eliminating the jobs of 48 employees.

But today's closing may not be without consequence for Westfield River.

United Paper Workers Local 1499 yesterday met to decide whether to take the company to court for failing to give proper notice of the closing.

According to Andrew L. Bassett, union president, the union voted on whether to accept the company's proposed severance offer or to take the company to court. He declined to disclose the decision, saying the union first wants to inform Westfield River.

Severance pay

Bassett said Westfield River offered a severance deal that included one week's pay for workers with up to three years' of service at the plant, and two weeks for workers with more than three years.

After much debate, the union voted to accept the offer, but the union's international representative would not sign the agreement, said Bassett. He said by signing the agreement, the union would give up the right to bring a grievance or legal action against the company.

The question went back to a vote yesterday in a 90-minute union meeting held at the Morgan House restaurant.

He said the company notified workers in late January of the plant closing and layoffs effective Feb. 28. But since then, he said, a number of workers have already been told not to report to work.

Only a few have been able to find jobs, he said.

Westfield River officials have refused to return numerous phone messages left at the plant in Russell, which will absorb the mill's production of glassine paper products.

DA's office rules Lee Assessors acted lawfully

Eagle 2-28-92

LEE — Joseph Castronova's efforts to seek nullification of the Board of Assessors' actions at a Nov. 4 executive session meeting have met with no success.

Castronova, self-appointed political watchdog of town government, had challenged the Nov. 4 meeting, at which the Assessors voted to grant a property tax abatement to the Oak n' Spruce Resort.

He wrote a letter on Dec. 10 to Berkshire County District Attorney Gerard D. Downing seeking an investigation into the matter, but the reply was not what Castronova had hoped for.

Assistant District Attorney Joseph Pieropan wrote that rescinding the action of the Nov. 4 meeting is not warranted.

Minutes published

"Although the board did not act prudently in denying you the opportunity to tape record the meeting that night, the subsequent publication of the minutes of that meeting per your request resolved any potential violation of the open meeting law," Pieropan wrote.

Furthermore, he wrote, meetings to discuss applications for tax abatements or exemptions are not open to public view and are appropriately handled in executive sessions.

In December, Castronova had complained that the board prevented him from recording a public meeting. At that meeting, Castronova was escorted from the office by a police officer.

That complaint drew an opinion that the Assessors acted improperly in denying Castronova the right to tape the meeting.

Earlier this week, Castronova said he was not satisfied with the recent opinion, since it did not address whether the property tax abatement of more than $45,000 was properly granted.

He said he would ask the Selectmen to seek an investigation into that matter from the attorney general's office.

Laurie Forfa

Eagle

A patchwork of lives

2/29/92

LEE

In 1977 the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County (Calif.) Commission on the Status of Women started a women's history week. The members wanted an official way for schools and communities to call attention to the overlooked contributions made by women to our nation's history.

Two years later director Molly Murphy MacGregor related the group's efforts at the Women's History Institute at Sarah Lawrence College. The participants were inspired by her presentation and sought a congressional resolution declaring a national women's history week.

In 1981 Rep. Barbara Mikulski, D-Md., and Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, cosponsored the first congressional resolution for the designation of a women's history week. Yearly declarations followed, and in 1987 the week became Women's History *Month.*

Berkshire County got actively involved in 1986 when Barbara Shepetin, who worked for the state Department of Education, promoted teacher workshops to assist area educators in learning more about women's history and persuaded three local women's groups (Commission on Berkshire Women, League of Women Voters of Central Berkshire and the Junior League of Berkshire County) to sponsor a Real Women essay contest in which young people could write about the women — *real women* — mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, friends, historical figures, teachers, who had influenced their lives.

The results were encouraging and sustained. March continues to be designated Women's History Month. The local celebration is still anchored by the essay contest, whose sponsorship has grown from three to 14 organizations and which drew an overwhelming 125 essay entries this year, according to Mary Ellen Ausman of Pittsfield, who has worked with the contest project since its inception.

Teacher workshops on women's history are readily available, and educational materials have mushroomed. The 1992 national resource catalog boasts 48 pages of books, posters, videos, movies, tapes and kits for preschool through Grade 12.

But the work is hardly over. Activities and resources and celebrations are all positive steps, but not the ultimate goal to be achieved. This year's congressional resolution articulates continuing concern about recognition of women's contributions as it declares:

"Whereas American women of every race, class and ethnic background have made historic contributions to the growth and strength of our Nation in countless recorded and unrecorded ways. . . .

"Whereas American women of every race, class and ethnic background served as early leaders in the forefront of every major progressive social change movement.

"Whereas American women have been leaders, not only in securing their own rights of suffrage and equal opportunity, but also in the abolitionist movement, the emancipation movement, the industrial labor movement, the civil rights movement, and other movements, especially the peace movement, which create a more fair and just society for all, and

"Whereas despite these contributions the role of American women in history has been consistently overlooked and undervalued, in the literature, teaching and study of American history. . . ."

The goal is to achieve integration of women's contributions into our full view of history, not to continue to see women's history only as some kind of addition or attachment to *regular* history.

My daughter's high school U.S. history textbook is a good example of the current state of affairs. On the one hand there is much more content about women included than in books from years past. The index listing under *WOMEN* contains more than 20 references — women in the abolitionist movement, business, Civil War, the labor movement, World Wars I and II — clearly recognizing women's participation in those events.

Her book, however, contains no special index entry called *MEN*. That's unnecessary. They are looked up under their names. Theirs is the history schoolchildren routinely study.

Perhaps a key sign of success in uncovering, promoting and integrating women's history will be when women's contributions flow freely through our nation's textbooks without requiring a special category related to gender.

This year's theme is "Women's History: A Patchwork of Many Lives." In a patchwork the pieces come together to make the whole. That's what needs to happen with women's history. The missing women's pieces need to be identified and joined with the rest of established history to provide a comprehensive view that ultimately is not taught as men's history or as women's history, but simply as our history.

90

The Berkshire Eagle

2/29/92

CITY & TOWN

Photos by Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

George Allen walks away from his home on Route 20 in Lee after talking with builder John H. Goddard about replacing the front door.

A matter of seconds

By D.R. Bahlman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE -- Alma Allen had just put on water for coffee and was getting into her coat for the quick trip to the front yard to pick up yesterday morning's Eagle. Luckily, she never got out the door.

It was 6:57 a.m. by the kitchen clock when Allen heard a tremendous crash.

"At first I thought it was an explosion," said Allen, who has lived in the house on Water Street with her husband, George, since 1940.

After a minute or two, Allen saw what had happened.

A tractor-trailer truck had skidded off Water Street (Route 20) and hit two 35-foot-tall spruce trees, which then fell on the front porch.

"The Eagle was right where the truck was," said Allen.

Worried about the possibility of fire, Allen, her husband and their daughter, Beverly, got out of the house.

"I don't think he was going too

TRUCK, continued on B4

Bud Fitzpatrick of R.W.'s Towing & Recovery looks over the truck.

'He hit some ice and that was it,' Alma Allen said of the driver, whom she described as 'very nice.'

Eagle 2/29/92

A close call for a Lee woman

■ TRUCK, from B1

fast," Allen said of the tractor-trailer's driver, who was not hurt in the crash. "He hit some ice and that was it."

The identity of the driver, whom Allen described as "very nice," and other details of the accident could not be determined yesterday. She said the driver told her that his supervisors had asked him to stay off the Massachusetts Turnpike in order to save traveling costs.

Carpenter on job

Lee Police Officer William Bartini said that no report was available late yesterday afternoon. He noted that the state Registry of Motor Vehicles requires that a report be prepared within five days, and suggested that a reporter call back on Monday.

Allen said a crew was working yesterday afternoon cleaning up diesel fuel that spilled from the tanks that supply the tractor-trailer's engine. The vehicle was not carrying any cargo, she said.

Also, a carpenter was checking the porch.

"I guess the roof is OK, but verything underneath it is going to have to be replaced," she said, adding that the house, which is located 1,000 feet east of the turnpike interchange, also will require a new front door.

The spruce trees, which the family planted about 35 years ago, also will be missed, said Allen.

"They were a good sound barrier," she said.

Allen recalls several accidents that occurred on Route 20 near her house prior to the construction of the turnpike in the mid-1950s. However, this is the first time that an accident has actually involved the house, she said.

"I remember in the early '50s a truck turned over and spilled Valentine candy," she said. "Everybody had chocolate for about a month."

Century Cable Lists Rate Hikes

LEE—Century Berkshire Cable will adjust its monthly service rates for its Silver Tier and Gold Tier service as of April 1. The cost for the Silver Tier and Gold Tier will increase from $2 per month to $3 per month; this is a 9.5% increase for Gold Tier subscribers and a 5.2% increase for Silver Tier subscribers. There will be no change to the basic rate.The rate for Home Box Office will increase from $9.50 per month to $10.50 per month, and the rate for the Disney Channel from $7 per month to $9 per month. All other premium service rates remain the same.

The rates for these services have not been adjusted in over five years and are being increased due to increased programming fees, according to Century Berkshire Cable .

The company stated that increased operating, maintenance, programming, utilities, insurance, telephone service and plant maintenance costs; cable system construction; employee training; and network programming fees were factors in the adjustment.

They have notified all boards of selectmen and the Four Town Cable Advisory Committee. Century Cable has served Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, and Stockbridge since 1982.

91

The Berkshire Eagle

CITY & TO

Eagle 3-2-92

Craig F. Walker / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee Central School crossing guard Kenneth S. Brown may see his position chopped by the town's budget ax.

Left out in the cold?

Lee school crossing guard, 75, may lose his post via budget cuts

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — On school days, outside Lee Central School on High Street, a lively, 75-year-old crossing guard conducts an informal one-man show as he halts traffic to make safe passage.

As the children walk by, he occasionally pats a small head, checks out art projects and passes out peppermint candy.

Kenneth S. Brown, wiry, eager and unceremoniously clad in his own attire with no official identification as a guard, calls most of the children "Butch," "Curly" and "Little Cinderella." At Christmastime, mothers ply him with cookies and cakes as thanks for getting their children across the street safely.

So last week, he was annoyed to learn that the Police Department had trimmed its proposed fiscal 1993 budget by eliminating $7,800 to pay the salaries of two crossing guards: Brown and Trudy Lorance, who works on Orchard Street outside St. Mary's School. The department would also forgo a police cruiser, at a cost of $16,000, to keep next year's budget down.

News of the cut of the crossing guards' salary — just one of many services in town that might require a Proposition 2½ override election to approve a tax hike — caused a flap at the Selectmen's meeting last week.

"I don't know what the hell's going on," said Brown, who has led children across the street for the past three years. "I don't really care about the job, I just like the kids. One of these kids must be worth more than 7,800 bucks a year."

Brown spends three hours a day outside Lee Central School, earning $7.35 per hour. He gets weekends and holidays off, as well as summers. It's not a bad job for a fellow who retired after 43 years of driving a truck, he said.

"Otherwise, I've got to do dishes and mop floors," he said. "Down here, I'm my own boss."

He and his wife have 10 grandchildren of their own, besides all his extra ones at Lee Central.

Watching the 'little guys'

It's the littler ones he worries about. The big ones don't pay him much attention, he said.

"The big kids run all over, but the little guys stand right here on the curb and wait for me to help them cross the road," Brown said, with a certain dignity and protectiveness.

"You have to have a pocketful of hard candy once in a while," he confides. "But not going in, just on the way home."

As he speaks to a reporter on the curb, schoolchildren stand patiently by his

LEE, continued on B3

Eagle 3/2/92

Lee crossing guards may face budget ax

■ LEE, from B1

side, waiting for him to enter the street and raise his arms to stop traffic.

He says he has a good deal, working a few hours a day for a good cause. And apparently he is not the only one.

"There's a woman up the street who wants my job in the worst way," he says. "She came and asked me when am I going to give it up."

Brown may have to give up his job at the end of the school year.

Liability problems?

At last week's Selectmen's meeting, School Committee member Carol LePrevost let loose a tirade after hearing that the guards' budget had been cut. She called the action "disgusting" and warned the Selectmen, "You'd better increase your liability insurance."

"You're talking about the safety of kids in this town, and I'd rather see an officer go or a cruiser go," she said.

The crossing guard budget was cut last year but was restored when funds were found. But town officials are not counting on finding any extra money this year.

So voters may be asked to approve a fiscal 1993 tax hike to pay for crossing guards and a number of other services and expenditures, according to Finance Committee Chairman John DeVarennes.

He delivered a status report on the 1993 budget to the Selectmen last week and will return to their meeting tonight at 8:15 to talk some more.

DeVarennes said the crossing guards may or may not end up on a menu of expense items voters would consider at the election booths; funds might be shifted around so that the list of items needing an override is different.

At last year's override election, voters refused to increase property taxes in order to finance some services, most of which were later restored when the town came up with extra money.

Because the school budget is still incomplete, and because Lee's share of state aid is unknown but will probably decline, next year's budget will be nip and tuck.

Proposed cuts

Knowing that, department heads have suggested cutting some items from their budgets in order to meet Proposition 2½ levy limits. They are: $7,800 for two crossing guards, $16,000 for a new police cruiser, $10,000 for part of the Assessors' cost of property revaluation, $5,500 for weed removal at Laurel Lake, $3,325 for Fire Department pagers, $1,900 to keep 18 streetlights on and $1,200 for the town's contribution to the Lee Youth Association summer playground program.

"It hasn't been decided that those are the things that will be on the ballot," said DeVarennes. But it is almost certain that the School Department budget will require an override, he said.

The budget for the current fiscal year is close to $8 million, said DeVarennes.

"This is what's facing the town," he said. "We just can't continue to meet the tax cap and maintain what we have for services in the town. There's no way we can do that because of things that are fixed costs."

92

The Schmidingers: Eagle 3/21/92

Skiing is exciting, but it's no life of leisure

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The lives of Kim and Krista Schmidinger sound idyllic, thrilling, even heroic.

The 21-year-old twins are tight friends. They do what they love from morning until night. They are world class skiers, members of the U.S. Ski team, racing among the proficient in the world.

They travel the world over from late summer until spring in search of snow and races in Norway, Argentina, Europe, Colorado, Japan, Alaska. Their hometown neighbors hold them up proudly as symbols of success, and townspeople here recently threw a grand bash for Krista when she returned from the Winter Olympics with respectable finishes in two ski events. She and her sister were paraded through town on a blaring fire truck and were deposited at a party attended by several hundred townfolk who gathered at Greenock Country Club.

They relish their good fortune at excelling in something they love, but it's hardly a life of leisure, they say. The work of a world class skier is a demanding physical and mental discipline. There is constant travel, there are inevitable injuries, months away from home, and there is jet lag.

A 10th of a second in a race can make or break an entire week. And the pressure to succeed has its financial side as well, since sponsors' payments to skiers increase depending on achievement.

"People say, 'What a life they have!' " says their mother, Judy Schmidinger. "But it kind of upsets me because people have no clue about the training and work they do. They're not out there sightseeing."

Backyard slope

The discipline began as fun, at a young age, in their family's backyard. Their father, Elmar, made snow slopes for the girls to ski on. Then they learned at Eastover Resort, and later at Bousquet in Pittsfield. By age 7, they were competing in "Snoopy" Races, and, around age 10, began competing in Tri-State competition. By age 15, they had been recruited to the U.S. Ski Team. Their first race as ski team members was in Italy, a world championship children's race.

Since then, they have traveled years' worth of racing circuits.

They transferred from Lee High School to Stratton Mountain School, a private ski academy in Vermont, where they received scholarships.

"I was sitting in classrooms drawing race courses in my notebook," said Krista, who says she doesn't have the academic discipline of her sister.

Kim, on the other hand, confesses to feeling like athletic success comes more easily to her sister, where she has to work extra hard.

Krista recalls watching the Olympics as a child "and having extreme confidence and the feeling that I could do that."

Joel Librizzi / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Lee's Schmidinger twins, Krista (top left) and Kim (seated), got together with parents Judy and Elmar after Krista returned home from the Winter Olympics.

Says Kim, "I don't think we came up with the idea that we could compete. We had a very disciplined will to do the best we could. It wasn't the idea of beating anybody."

Early on in their lives, they knew what they wanted, they said.

"The difference between us and other kids was that we knew what we wanted to do," said Krista. "We realized at an early age what we were good at. A lot of people don't get that until much later. We realized we had a gift."

Parents sacrificed

Throughout their childhood, their parents supported and encouraged them.

"They're the ones who sacrificed," Krista says. "We were the ones having fun, and they were driving around, paying the bills and standing in the cold."

It hasn't just been Mom and Dad supporting them. An older sister, Sherri, who lives in Shrewsbury, is forever meeting Kim and Krista at airports, sending notes of encouragement and support. Younger brother Erich, 16, also a student at Stratton, seems to be following his sisters' path.

Paying the expensive costs of skiing was a cooperative effort, the twins say. Friends, ski companies, fund-raisers, all helped foot the bills along the way.

And while they competed against each other, "we're encouragingly competitive," Kim says. "We like to do good or bad as a unit."

Krista replies, "It's a perfect friendship we have. It's a twin thing."

Kim couldn't ski with Krista in the Olympics because of a knee injury she suffered in late 1990. She was off skis for six months, and recently started training again. She knew early on that she wouldn't be an Olympic contender this year.

Kim isn't too disappointed; she sees Krista's singular Olympic debut as part of an unspoken arrangement they have.

Krista was born first, and has always been the first to try things — sneaking out the bedroom window, for one thing, Kim recalls.

"If Krista could get away with it, I could, too," she said. "That's how I look at it."

Eagle 3/3/92

Lee chamber gains temporary reprieve

By D.R. Bahlman
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — The Chamber of Commerce, which must leave its present quarters in a train caboose behind Sullivan Station restaurant by tomorrow, has a new home — at least for 60 days.

The Selectmen voted last night to allow the chamber to occupy space in the Airoldi Building for two months. Continuation of the arrangement will depend largely on the results of a study of space in the town-owned building by the Department of Public Works, they said.

"This is more than I expected. I'm very pleased," said chamber president Mary K. Bradbury after the board's unanimous vote.

Bradbury said the organization will pay its share of utility and other costs.

Market tenant

The chamber has occupied the caboose, which has office space inside, for about two years. However, the landlord, Sullivan Station owner Marilyn Kelly, recently found a tenant willing to pay full market rent for the space.

Bradbury said last night that some news accounts have implied that the chamber was pushed out.

"That's not what happened.... Business is business," she said. "We understand completely why we had to move."

In other business last night, the Selectmen voted unanimously to allow former DPW board member Joseph Castronova to examine the minutes of executive sessions they held on seven dates in 1991, provided that their release would have no impact on ongoing negotiations or litigation.

According to a letter submitted by Castronova to the board, four of the sessions concerned negotiations with the union representing the town's police officers, and a fifth meeting had to do with DPW contract talks. The subjects of the other two sessions could not be determined from the minutes of public meetings July 15 and 29, 1991, said Castronova.

No 'witch hunt'

"I'm not on any witch hunt here," said Castronova, who asserted that he has a right to see the minutes. He also accused the Selectmen of "being very bullheaded" about releasing them.

Also at his urging, the Selectmen voted to ask the Board of Assessors to amend its budget request to include funds to cover the cost of publishing a list of the valuation of all properties in town and their tax assessments.

Pointing to a section of the town's bylaws that requires such a list to be published every year, Castronova, who has raised questions recently about tax abatements granted to several businesses, said the most recent list he could find was from 1979.

Selectman Martin H. Deely said that, although he favors compliance with the bylaw, he does not think the list would be particularly useful this year.

"This is not the year to do it," said Deely. "Why not wait until next year when the revaluation is done?"

Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. DuPont said he thinks publication of the list was suspended because of its cost.

"I think it may have cost almost as much as the annual report," he said.

Also, last night, the Selectmen agreed to place an article on the warrant of the annual town meeting May 14 that will ask town representatives whether they want the state Department of Public Works to put a traffic light at the intersection of Park, West Park and Main streets.

A petition requesting the article was submitted to the board by former Selectman William Bean, who collected the signatures of 34 registered voters.

Bean cited a letter from the DPW that said the project was initiated by the town. The letter describes the signal as a "safety improvement project" that may be eligible for federal funding.

Eagle 3/3/92

DuPont faces challenge from two candidates

LEE — Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. DuPont, who will run for re-election in May, will face at least two opponents who want his seat on the Board of Selectmen.

Gordon P. Bailey and Aldo V. Pascucci, both members of the Planning Board, have taken out nomination papers for the seat, said Town Clerk Patricia D. Carlino.

The deadline for returning papers is March 27, she said. Pascucci has already returned his documents, she added.

Planning Board member Jill Bickford-Groff has taken out papers to run for re-election to that board.

Bailey launched an unsuccessful challenge against Selectman Martin H. Deely in last year's election. Both he and Pascucci are independents.

DuPont, 47, a Democrat, was first elected to the board three years ago.

Carlino said he may face more challengers after the Democratic and Republican town committees hold their caucuses in April to nominate candidates for various offices.

The Democratic caucus is scheduled for April 10 at the Lee Senior Center, and the Republican caucus is set for April 9 at the school superintendent's office in Lee Central School.

The town election will be May 18.

The ballots will be smaller this year, because Lee will be operating under a town administrator form of government. The change means that certain municipal positions — the assessors, town clerk and treasurer, and Board of Health members — will be appointed instead of elected.

The Selectmen are in the process of reviewing about 100 applications from people interested in the town administrator position, said Pauline Pollard, assistant to the board.

Truck skidded on ice, struck trees, police say

LEE — The tractor-trailer that damaged George and Alma Allen's house on Route 20 in East Lee on Friday apparently skidded out of control on an icy road, Lee Police said yesterday.

Officer William Bartini said a police report states that the truck, driven by Robert Page Jr., 57, of 7818 South Bennett St., Chicago, Ill., was going west on Route 20 when it slid on ice across the eastbound lane. The truck traveled up onto the shoulder and knocked down two tall spruce trees that crashed into the Allen's porch.

No charges have been brought against Page, said Bartini.

The incident at 6:57 a.m. could have been a disastrous one, as Alma Allen was about to step outside to retrieve her morning newspaper, she said Friday. Her porch was crushed by the falling trees.

The accident caused diesel fuel to spill from the gas tanks. The truck was carrying no cargo.

Allen told The Eagle on Friday that Page had told her he was using Route 20 because his supervisor had told him to avoid the Massachusetts Turnpike in order to save travel expenses.

Eagle 3/3/92

94

Eagle 3/4/92

Lee Selectmen to examine Oak n' Spruce tax abatement

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — Joseph Castronova has persuaded the Selectmen to take a closer look at the procedure used by the Board of Assessors to grant the financially troubled Oak n' Spruce Resort a tax abatement of more than $100,000 over two years.

Castronova, who needles various town boards about everything from snowplowing to executive sessions and the structure of town government, has contended that there were "improprieties" in the way the Assessors went about granting the tax abatement.

Isolated incident

He acknowledged that the Oak n' Spruce case appears to be an isolated incident and said he doesn't know of any particular pattern of impropriety.

Castronova's complaints on the matter haven't gotten him much help from the district attorney's office, he said, and Monday he asked the Selectmen to ask the state attorney general's office to look into the matter.

The Selectmen declined. Two said they were satisfied with the Assessors' explanations. Selectman Martin H. Deely suggested that Castronova pursue the matter if he wanted to.

But Selectmen Chairman Joseph F. DuPont wanted more information.

After town resident Marguerite A. Tristany chided the board for making Castronova do all the legwork in this matter, Selectmen Deely and Diane Roosa agreed that the board should write a letter to the Assessors, seeking some answers into the Oak n' Spruce situation.

Explanation needed

"The key here is PR," said DuPont. "No one's saying the Assessors did anything illegal, but there are a lot of people upset about this.... The Assesors should explain what the procedures are."

William Derrick, chairman of the Assessors, told the Selectmen that his board has followed the law in granting abatements, for which there are frequent applications, including that given to Oak n' Spruce. But he said he could not discuss specific reasons for granting abatements, since such matters are considered confidential under state law.

"I don't have any idea why we're here," Derrick said to the Selectmen, apparently baffled by being summoned to their office.

Assessor Edward "Buddy" Briggs, however, took aim at Castronova, whom he suggested may have other motives.

In tax title

"We're here to answer your questions," he said to the Selectmen. "Not to be on Castronova's kangaroo court."

Oak n' Spruce has been in financial trouble for some years,

'No one's saying the Assessors did anything illegal, but there are a lot of people upset about this.'

— Selectman DuPont

and the property has been in tax title — that dark status where the town can seize the property for non-payment of taxes. Once a property is in tax title, the collection matter is in the hands of the town treasurer, Patricia D. Carlino. Oak n' Spruce has since filed for protection under the bankruptcy laws.

According to Castronova, the only public record of the tax abatement is a Feb. 12, 1991, letter from Carlino to a bank official at First Atlantic Savings Federal Savings, a New Jersey bank that has since folded.

That letter essentially says that if the bank official gets his documentation in on time, an abatement will probably be granted for part of 1990's taxes, said Castronova. The letter suggested that the same abatement formula would apply for 1991 taxes.

The abatements represented about 30 percent of the the resort's tax bills.

To Castronova, Carlino's letter represented an improper solicitation for an abatement application, which ended up costing the town tax money.

He claimed the Assessors had no record of granting a tax abatement to Oak n' Spruce in the minutes of their meetings. While Castronova was able to determine that the abatement had been allowed at an October 1990 Assessors' meeting, he could find no written record of the decision, he said.

However, Carlino said there were several discussions with the Oak n' Spruce representative regarding the tax abatement.

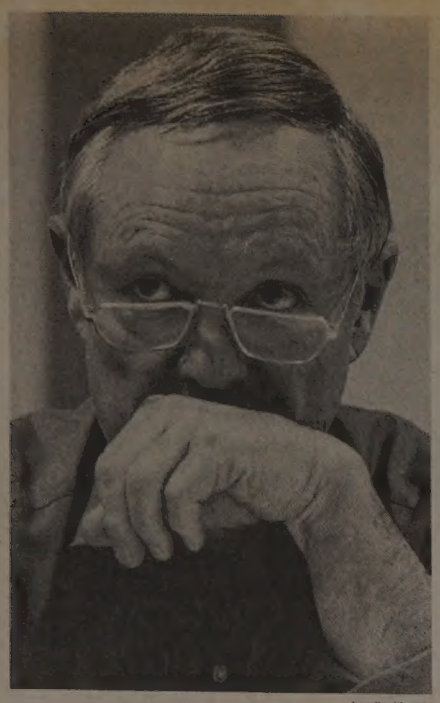
Carlino spoke up Monday night to say that when a property is in tax title, the risk of getting no money at all is great. Therefore, she said, she did whatever she could to get some taxes from the resort. She said she never solicited an application for an abatement.

"My name is being bandied about town in a light that's not quite fair," she said. "If this happens again I'll pursue whatever legal solutions I can" to collect some taxes, she said.

The town allowed an abatement of $45,111 for 1990 and $59,194 for 1991, according to Castronova's figures.

The abatements drew fire from some members of the audience at the Selectmen's meeting, who talked about what that money could buy.

But Finance Committee Chairman John E. DeVarennes said the tax abatement for Oak n' Spruce wouldn't save the town from a Proposition 2½ override election this year.



Leslie Noyes

Edward M. Lahey

'If you have sex with an HIV carrier, you'd better wear a wet suit.'

Eagle 3/4/92 — *Dr. Todd LePine*

In Lee, condom debate plays to small crowd

By Ellen G. Lahr
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LEE — If last night's sparsely attended meeting at the Lee Central School was any indication of community sentiment, Lee isn't ready to install condom vending machines in its high school restrooms.

Most of those who spoke said the role of schools is to teach about sexual responsibility, AIDS and decision-making. But the schools should not take on the task of making condoms available to students, they said.

Still, a number of supporters advocated taking any possible steps to prevent the spread of HIV, the sexually transmitted virus that leads to AIDS.

Among them were two School Committee members, Gary Norton and Judith Olds. Members Carol LePrevost and Roland Besaw voiced opposition. Chairman Edward Lahey and member David K. Chivers did not state their views.

Lahey said the committee will take up the matter for discussion, and possibly a vote, at its next meeting on March 17.

Kathleen Bort, Lee High School's dean of

CONDOMS, continued on B5

Few attend Lee meeting on condoms

■ CONDOMS, from B1

Eagle 3/4/92

students, said the schools are educating students and parents extensively about sexual issues. She questioned whether making condoms available would enhance students' education and change students' behavior.

"My fear is their behavior won't change," she said. "I don't feel we can accept the blame if condom machines are there and students don't use them."

Health teacher Mark Hungate also opposed the idea, saying that if teen-agers are too embarrassed to purchase condoms in a store, then they'll probably be too embarrassed "to stop what they're doing to put it on."

Connie McCarthy, a Lee resident, spoke to the moral questions that arise with condoms in the schools. Young people must be taught "to be responsible, loving, caring and to know the meaning of commitment." The message with condoms, she said, is "do it, but don't get caught."

Young people need to know the difference between love and lust, she said.

Offering a medical view, Dr. Todd LePine, who practices medicine in Stockbridge, said offering condoms "presupposes that the benefits of using a condom outweigh the risks."

Band-Aid approach

Condoms don't guarantee protection from the HIV virus, he said, and "are a Band-Aid attempt to protect our children."

Contending that the virus can be spread through open wounds and possibly through kissing, he said: "If you have sex with an HIV carrier, you'd better wear a wetsuit."

Furthermore, he said, since AIDS cases among heterosexuals are most commonly caused by drug use, "we should also be giving out clean needles."

But Dr. Noel Blagg, chief of infectious diseases at Berkshire Medical Center and a member of the Red Cross speakers' bureau on AIDS, later disputed LePine. He said condoms have indeed been shown to prevent the spread of AIDS, and that no evidence exists to suggest that the virus can be spread through saliva.

No position on schools

Blagg, stressing that neither he nor the Red Cross takes a position on condoms in schools, said there must be some means of making condoms more readily available "as an important aspect of public health." There have been 37 AIDS cases in Berkshire County, and 16 of those patients have died, he said.

Seventy-five percent of high school seniors are sexually active by the time they graduate, he said.

Blagg said he has cared for AIDS patients since 1984.

"I'm tired of watching young people die in the prime of their lives," he said.

The Rev. Denis Ford, pastor of St. George's Episcopal Church, said the moral issue is that "the community should not block access to anything that would help prevent the spread of AIDS."

At the same time, education and research must take place. "And we need to teach abstinence where abstinence is appropriate," he said.

For Lee Central School Principal Steven Cozzaglio, abstinence is the message students should get.

"That's the way it's going to be," he said.

Naomi Petell, a senior at Lee High School, said some students oppose installing condom machines.

"If kids are ready to take on that responsibility, they should be responsible enough to go to a store and buy them," she said. "The reason they're embarrassed is they know they're doing something they shouldn't."

21 places in Lee

James Perkins, who coaches sports at Lee High School, said there are 21 places in Lee and Lenox Dale where someone can buy a condom. The school, he said, risks being pitted against parents by setting up a secretive way for students to get condoms.

Resident Nelson Daley agreed, saying the messages he is giving his daughter would be undercut by a condom vending machine in the school bathroom.

Paul Consolati, a senior and the student adviser to the School Committee, spoke in favor.

"People are dying," he said. "What are we going to do to stop this disease? If we won't put condoms in the schools we should look at other options and get something going in the community."

Castronova questions Lee Assessors on Oak 'n Spruce

advocate 3/4/92

Almost 18 months after the Lee Board of Assessors slashed the property taxes for Oak 'n Spruce Resort by $45,011.04, resident Joseph Castronova is questioning the decision and says there may have been improprieties.

Having failed to generate interest in the case from Berkshire County District Attorney Gerard D. Downing, Castronova says he will ask the state Attorney General's office to investigate.

In a bitter exchange, Castronova told the selectmen Monday the assessors did not follow procedure in granting the 1990 tax reduction, failed to document the decision and should not have given the abatement nor offered the same discount for fiscal year 1991.

"If the people of Lee knew how much money was being wasted in town, they'd have a tea party at Laurel Lake with it -- and they'd use the assessors and selectmen as the tea bags," Castronova said. "I'd like to know why I didn't get a letter from the treasurer suggesting I come in for an abatement."

But the assessors say Castronova -- a former selectman and chairman of the town Department of Public Works -- does not know what he is talking about.

"We made a judgment call for what we thought was the best interest of the town."

Assessors William Derrick and Edward M. Briggs and Treasurer Patricia Carlino reminded the selectmen and about 20 residents at the meeting that hindsight is 20-20. At the time of the abatement Oak 'n Spruce was in dire financial straits. The South Lee resort owed the town over $200,000 in back taxes, was badly in debt and was taken over by First Atlantic Savings Bank, which was on shaky financial ground itself.

The town had begun tax-taking procedures for the property and rather than push the issue for three or four years in court, Briggs says the assessors decided to accept a lesser amount of money.

"If we didn't get the $200,000 it could have all shown up on the tax rate," Briggs said. "We made a judgment call for what we thought was the best interest of the town. If the people disagree, then they can vote us out when our term ends. This is a problem that dates back to biblical days. Tax collectors and assessors weren't popular in those days either."

Carlino said that at the time she was under pressure to collect past-due tax payments. She added that her letter to the bank suggesting they ask for an abatement in 1991 was not improper because no promise was made that the abatement would be granted. The letter was dated four days after the 1991 tax bills were sent out, Castronova says.

"One of the first things I was admonished for when I became treasurer was not pursuing tax titles. I wanted the money as soon as possible," she said.

Derrick and Briggs said they will provide a written response to Castronova's complaints, but they added that much of the decision-making process is based on confidential information they cannot disclose.

But Castronova, Selectmen's Chairman Joseph F. DuPont and several residents say they were not fully satisfied with the assessors' explanation.

Citing a recent audit report, Castronova adds that the assessors have a history of failing to use proper procedure in granting abatements. He says the assessors and selectmen have not taken his questions seriously for several months and says the paper trail indicates there were improprieties.

"People want to know why they're being asked to pay more taxes when a big company is seeing its taxes cut," former Selectman William D. Bean told the board.

With some reluctance, Selectmen Diane P. Roosa and Martin Deely agreed to have the board formally ask the assessors to provide Castronova with a written explanation of the transaction.

"I'd like to get some understanding of what in the world happened," Dupont said.

96